

DANIEL AND JOHN

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DANIEL AND JOHN.

DANIEL AND JOHN:

OR

*THE APOCALYPSE OF THE OLD AND
THAT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.*

BY

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VICAR OF ALVEDISTON, WILTS.

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DANIEL;

OR,

The Apocalypse of the Old Testament.

AN INTRODUCTION,

ETC.

“Nobis summoperè studendum est, ut maneat vera et certa Scripturæ intelligentia.”—CALVINUS IN HOSEAM.

“I leave it to themselves to consider, whether they have in this first point, or not, overshot themselves.”—HOOKER, *Ecc. Pol.*, last paragraph of Book ii.

I. THOSE amongst us whose recollection goes back to their earliest impressions of the Sacred Volume, can hardly fail to remember that Daniel struck them from the beginning as unlike the rest of the Prophets. We may in some instances, or at some times, have preferred stories of marvel to sublime denunciations: yet the stir awakened in us at the words, “*Hear, O Heaven, and give ear, O Earth, for the Lord hath spoken,*” had but faint counterpart in the languid feeling with which we listened to an enumeration of “*the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.*” The one had the trumpet-sound of song; the other drawled like official prose. If we grew up within the circle of ecclesiastical sayings, other differences could hardly fail to be impressed upon us. Other Prophets had foretold the sufferings and glory of Christ; Daniel had marked the time of his coming. The Jews might, with some violence, explain the other Prophets away: despairing of Daniel, they had removed him out of the roll of the Prophets into a secondary place. Even Butler, whose sagacity needed only

a larger literary furniture to anticipate many difficulties of our time, and who ought to be quoted on the side of conscience instead of on that of tradition, formally excepted Daniel from the large concessions which he contemplated as possible under the head of Prophetic Interpretation. A question which involved the honour of Christianity could hardly remain a question. If digressions from Babylon to the Ottoman empire and the Church of Rome were unlike the general style of the Prophets, they were the more interesting as long as they did not perplex us. Sir John Marsham, whose "Canon Chronicus" seems to have been more valued in foreign countries than in his own, might explain the seven weeks as the period from the commencement of the Captivity (and if he had made this commence at the destruction of the city, B.C. 588, he would have found the period just forty-nine years down to Cyrus, whom the Isaiah of the Return calls the Anointed of God, B.C. 538); similarly, he found sixty-two weeks, four hundred and thirty-four years (which, with sabbatical allowances, might be made more exact), down to Antiochus. Collins might go farther in questioning the authorship of the book. Gibbon might write in a feigned name a letter on the subject, not destined to be fully answered by Bishop Hurd. "Such objections were as old as Porphyry." It did not always occur to us that Porphyry's judgment as a critic in literature was infinitely superior to that of almost any Christian Father, or that his opportunities of information exceeded our own. Bentley, one of the few scholars of the very highest eminence whom the English Universities have produced, seems to have been unable to prevent himself from taking Porphyry's side, and might have left us fuller disclosures if it had not been for a person who promised to obey him.¹ But this great scholar, as Bishop

¹ "He was so far from being satisfied, that he immediately began to suppose that his disappointment arose from the sacred books of Daniel and the Revelation themselves, and not only from his own, or the Bishop's misunderstanding them. . . . He pretended also that there had never

Monk has finely observed, does not appear to have lived under the dominion of Christian principles. To Dr. Arnold belongs the merit of first among English clergymen saying outright, and without the possibility of his judgment being ascribed to religious indifference, that the same tests which on the whole vindicate the genuineness of the larger part of the Prophets, compel us to assign to Daniel a lower chronological rank, which must affect the degree in which history or prediction enter into its contents. It was not Arnold's desire to draw dangerous inferences; though he might not have been able to prevent such from being drawn.

If any such thing can be conceived as a question affecting religion, yet turning upon literary evidence, and opening one course of investigation to all men independently of religious creeds or theories, such was this question of the Book of Daniel. So the Church of the Reformation conceived, when, with a noble simplicity, in an age when such questions were already stirred, she declared her acceptance of "four Prophets the greater and twelve Prophets the less," but laid no restriction upon investigations as to the interpretation, authorship, and history. Still, if one theory of the book be called Christian, while another is called the Jewish or rationalistic theory, it may be foreseen, that hardly one mind in a thousand will compare evidence

been a version of Daniel made by the Septuagint. . . . Nay, when Dr. Bentley was courting his lady, who was a most excellent Christian woman, he had like to have lost her, by stating to her an objection against the Book of Daniel, as if its author, in describing Nebuchadnezzar's image of gold (Daniel vi.) to be sixty cubits high and but six cubits broad, knew no better than that men's height were ten times their breadth, whereas, it is well known to be not more than six times, which made the good lady weep. . . . He aimed also to pick a quarrel with some small niceties in Daniel's chronology, and supposed the book to have been written after the time of Onias, the high priest; and that Onias was Daniel's Messiah, and that *the slaughter of this Onias at Antioch was the cutting off of the Messiah*. In short, he was very anxious to get clear of the authority of the Book of Daniel."—1 *Whiston's Memoirs*, 94-5. The passage oddly suggests the antithesis of "a despotism of professors."

for the two dispassionately. The comfort which men who practise their religion derive from it, and the awe with which men who do not practise it regard it, are employed to weight the scales ; until, paradoxical as it may sound, thousands who know nothing of the literary evidence but what some one a little less ignorant than themselves has told them, will not only stake their salvation upon a point of literary chronology, but will imagine this to be the only, or the strongest, reason for believing things of an entirely different kind, which their experience has taught them to value, and without which they would have judged the literary matter differently. If God wrote the Book of Daniel so that it should contain predictions to prove Christianity, a theory which explains the predictions and destroys the proof, may with no greater extravagance than polemicists allow themselves, be said to place us in an attitude of defiance toward the Divine Majesty, taking away from mankind their dearest hopes, or sapping the foundation on which they rest. It is not wonderful that men who have definite duties and indefinite ideas of what criticism means, should shrink from the appearance of such presumption as is thus ascribed to them. Who are we that the evidence which satisfied Sir Isaac Newton should not content us ? Whether he examined the evidence, or what he sometimes said upon it, and whether his doctrinal views in general should be our model, is a different thing. But why should we forfeit one world, and risk another ; that, too, one in which any hope of an ending of penalties is itself penal ?

Per me si va nella città dolente,
Per me si va tra la perduta gente :
Lasciate ogni speranza, voi che 'ntrate.

2. On the other hand, the grave nature of the interests involved in what seemed at first only a question of sacred literature, tends to remove it out of the category of curiosity into that of duty. If there are elements in our faith, practical

or speculative, which we are justified in refusing to prove, leaving the burden of argument on whoever assails them, a literary position, especially one considered as an outwork, can claim no such immunity from account ; some investigation of the evidence is in this case required by justice to the Jews, whose tradition of the canon has been arraigned ; by loyalty to the faith of which we are ministers, whose evidences are supposed to be jeopardied ; above all, by reverence for the holy name of God, which if not righteously invoked, has been wantonly paraded. The strong language which the Oxford Regius Professor of Hebrew has permitted himself to use on this subject might not be too strong, though it would be needless, if the critics against whom he directs it had either falsified their statement of the evidence, or violated a sanctity antecedent and paramount to all evidence. There should be some criterion by which the tone of righteous indignation may be distinguished from the gall of bitterness. Most men have some Rubicon of sacredness in regard to revelation : with one it has been the Anglican version ; with another it has been, in one stage of his life, the voice of the English Episcopate,—surely a criterion short of the highest ; with many men it is whatever the Bible shall on due explanation be found to contain ; with others it is the religious element in the Bible ; with others the spirit of the Bible, the life out of which the book sprang, and which in turn it has tended to generate in the world ; with some it is the New Testament, independently of the Old ; with others, it is the mind of Christ, to which the New Testament affords the best approximative clue ; with others, it is the human conscience, placed sensibly in presence of the heart-searching God ; or again, the ultimate evidence, and a great point of sacredness, is the perpetual coincidence between the words of Christ and the voice of our conscience, whenever they are brought fairly into contact : to some, the only trustworthy evidence of revelation seems miracles ; to others, Divine illumination enforcing truth or fitness of doctrine, appears, in the midst of undoubted miracles, to be alone

capable of implanting the faith that saves, and where miracles are questioned, to be not merely their permitted substitute, but the rightful occupant of their place : again, men of phlegmatic thought, without denying the Divine origin of illumination, think its effects not different from such mental operations as enable us to embrace moral evidence : almost any of these views, or a combination of them, leaves place for the Church, as harmonizing the consciences, and embodying the convictions, of the community. Can a reason be given why, on any theory of Revelation or of its evidences, one account of the Book of Daniel is to be preferred to another? Must the preference be such, that the one account has its place on the sacred soil, and within the charmed bower, where none may lift a spear? or in this, as in other instances, is the life independent of place and time, permitting us to settle history in whatever way the evidence may suggest? Suppose a person predisposed to believe whatever he ought; take rather one who believes all the articles of the Christian faith, but who doubts whether a particular account of the Book of Daniel has a place among them; one who thinks, perhaps, that Christ would not have his disciples seek such knowledge¹ of the times and seasons as one interpretation of the book seems to disclose; yet one, whose faith in the Divine power of inspiration, the historical reality of miracles, and the prescience of prophecy, may give to inquiries on such subjects an interest vital and absorbing. How is such a person to decide between accounts of the Book of Daniel so conflicting as the one set forth for English readers in the following treatise, and another which has the benefit of Dr. Pusey's exposition in a more academic form? Can he be certain that his choice may not be fatal to his own soul? Some attempt to answer these questions will be the limited scope of this Introduction; which must not be understood to imply adoption of the more general views of either one of the two expositors.

¹ Acts i. 7.

3. On opening a common Hebrew Bible, we find three great Prophets, followed by the twelve minor Prophets, in familiar order. Only Daniel is wanting, and has to be sought in a subsequent collection of books. Among its neighbours there are, the Song of Songs, an ancient book, but one reckoned by the Jews semi-canonical; Ecclesiastes, whose signs of later origin bring it within about two centuries of the Christian era; Esther, a book unfixed, but falling low in the Persian, if not in the Grecian, period; the Books of Chronicles, which are allowed to contain genealogies implying interpolation or compilation subsequent to Alexander the Great;¹ and the collection of Psalms, which is believed (though not without dispute, yet) for reasons which cannot be lightly set aside, to contain compositions as late as the Maccabaic period. The "foolish man blaspheming daily" of Psalm lxxiv. (with which Psalm lxxix. should be compared) seems a direct allusion to the madman (ἐπιμανής) Antiochus. Without laying undue stress on conjectures, the result of this arrangement of the Book of Daniel is as if the English reader found it half-way between Malachi and St. Matthew. It is not an adequate explanation to say that Daniel, though gifted with prophecy, was excluded as not being a prophet by office. Neither was Amos a prophet, or a son of a prophet; yet his book is separated but by Joel from Hosea, to whose age he belonged. Daniel would probably have been placed by Ezekiel, if he had belonged to the same age. The inference of a lower date, which is obviously suggested by a place in the canon posterior to that of the prophets, is confirmed by the observation, that neither Zechariah, nor Haggai, following immediately the return from exile, contain any such allusion

¹ 1 Chron. iii. 21-24, where six generations have an appearance of following Zerubbabel (compare Jaddua, in Nehemiah xii. 11).

Dr. Pusey (p. 330) "gives to the section the appearance of an ancient gloss,"—a solution, which the passage, in common with others, may bear; but which its sponsor might have been expected to deplore as rationalism, if not to describe as "mere insolent assumption against Holy Scripture, grounded on unbelief" (p. 346).

to Daniel or his book, as a career so marvellous, and a book so significant, if they had been known, would have rendered natural, if not necessary. How could Ezra, or more strikingly Nehemiah, describe his own relation to Artaxerxes, and not be reminded of the eminence which Daniel had enjoyed in a Persian court, and of the marvellous revelations by which it had been won? If their thoughts called them in a different direction, at least an enumeration of all the worthies of Israel would not overlook so famous a name among the fathers that had gone before. Yet the son of Sirach in chapters xlvi., xlv. of Ecclesiasticus, has a word for Elijah and Elisha, Isaiah and Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Nehemiah, coming down to Simon the son of Onias; but with strange ingratitude, or natural unconsciousness, omits mention of Daniel. This kind of omission is exclusion, until at least some evidence appear on the other side. Its exclusive tendency will be increased, if Zechariah, without knowing Daniel, can be shown to enfold in germ what Daniel will expand.

Among the evidences by which the Old Testament Scriptures may to some extent, though not to a high antiquity, be tested, a prominent place belongs to ancient versions. Now, if we turn from a Hebrew canon of the Prophets, in which Daniel does not occur, and from a catalogue of the greater Prophets which does not mention him, to the Greek version, we are met by a singular phenomenon. Daniel is the solitary book of which Jerome¹ tells us, the Church read a version by Theodotion, in preference to the Septuagint, which required asterisks and obelisks to mark its errors and redundancies, though the censorious of that day, who have so many wonderful parallels in our own, blamed St. Jerome for departing from it. He does not explain why the Septuagint version of this book should be worse than that of others, but if the book did not exist, or had a doubtful and hardly canonical recognition, at the time when the Greek translation is supposed to

¹ Pref. lib. Dan.

have been made, we should have the groundwork of an explanation, the details of which may be filled in hereafter.

4. It can hardly be wrong at this stage of our inquiry to say that the external yet Biblical evidence suggests on its first blush a later origin for Daniel, than for the Prophets in general. Will the contents of the book furnish any reason for a contrary conclusion?

That parts of the book are written in Chaldee, that is, in a language differing from Hebrew much as old Lowland Scottish (say in Bishop Douglas's *Virgil*) differs from English, is not in itself conclusive of one date rather than another between B.C. 600 and B.C. 100. Can we, however, supposing Ezra under Artaxerxes about B.C. 460, and accepting the Targum called of Onkelos as falling at the earliest within the Christian era, detect a variation in the texture of the Chaldee, which would suggest for Daniel a place anterior, or subsequent to Ezra? No wide difference need be expected. A clear tendency of variation is thought to have been traced.

(a) The earliest verse of Chaldee in the Bible (Jer. x. 11) gives LeHoM as the pronoun for *to Them*. Ezra v. 3, 4, gives for the same, LeHoM, but also v. 2, 3, gives LeHoN. In Daniel the latter form LeHoN habitually occurs, *e.g.* vi. 3 (comp. v. 2, 3, 23), while the former, whatever may be the reason, has vanished. Now in the Targum of Onkelos on Genesis xl. 22, it is LeHoN, the latter form, the one current in Daniel, which is characteristic, while the former, if ever, does not normally occur. This implies something. More decidedly, the pronoun for *to You* in the proportion of five times to one throughout Ezra, as in v. 3, and vii. 24, is LeCHoM, whereas in Daniel iii. 4 (comp. ii. 5-9) it is LeCHoN. It is difficult to explain this particular variation otherwise than by supposing Daniel the later book. Turn to Onkelos on Genesis ix. 3; the word by which he expresses *to You* is LeCHoN. This is his normal, I believe his invariable usage. The first six verses of the 43rd chapter of Genesis give several instances for comparison of both pro-

nouns. (*b*). Again, in Ezra, the words *This house of God*, are expressed *Beith Eloho* DeCH, and *This city, Kiriathah* DaCH; the forms DeCH and DaCH representing the Hebrew ZeH and ZoTH. It is not denied that the form DeNaH also occurs in Ezra. The point is, that on turning to Daniel the forms DeCH and DaCH are no longer found; but are replaced by DA or DeNah, commonly the latter, as in ii. 18; v. 24, 25, and often (not to urge on either side a quasi-adverbial usage). I have no wish to strain out of this, the most disputable of the differences, more than I fairly ought, but still must adhere to those who see in it a later tendency of language. For how do the Targums, alike of Onkelos and of Jonathan Ben Uzziel, on Genesis v. 1, express *This Book*, Hebr. ZeH SePHeR? They use the form DeyN SePHaR. Similarly on Genesis xxviii. 15, 17, they express *This Place* by ATHRa HaDeyN, or ITHRa HaDeyN. The form is even reduplicated into a sort of plural, DeNaN (Gen. xxxi. 38). Let any one accustomed to weigh such transitions say, whether the cardinal letters in the Targums do not retain what is more characteristic of Daniel than of Ezra. It is a partial, but not a complete, answer, that on Gen. xxiv. 65, Onkelos expresses *That man* by *Gavra Deychi*. (*c*) Once more, the Hebrew word for *These* is ELeH. So in Jer. x. 11, and in Ezra v. 15, we read for *These*, ELeH (for *Those* we read in Ezra v. 9, ILLeCH). Whereas in Daniel we actually find for *These* the form ILLeN, vi. 7, and its still later equivalent ILLeYN (ii. 44; vi. 3; vii. 17), with which may be compared INNoN in ii. 44, and vi. 25. This is a most remarkable variation, the nature of which is placed beyond reasonable doubt by the form ILLeYN in Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel on Gen. ii. 4; ix. 19; x. 1, and wherever, otherwise than by *Denan*, the word *These* is expressed. The reader will have the pith of the argument before him, if he imagine himself opening a Rabbinical Bible, and observing this:—

<i>Hebrew Column.</i>	<i>Targum Column.</i>	<i>English.</i>
Eleh Toledoth.	Illeyn Toledath.	These are the generations.

Eleh in Ezra and Jeremiah.	Illeyn, or Illeyn, in Daniel.	These.
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This juxtaposition of forms weighs with my idiosyncrasy more than any multiplication of possibilities, or hard words. It is an exact analogy, that the Hebrew for *What* is MeH or MaH, but the Chaldee is MaN; and it is a less obvious illustration that the Hebrew for *Mouth* is PeH, but the Chaldee PouM. If any one contends, that in their own homes the Chaldee forms may have been the older, and that here is no euphonical change, nor necessary affinity, but only correspondence, my argument¹ makes no objection, provided it be allowed that in the Hebrew Scriptures, of which our inquiry is, the Chaldee forms (with the disputed exception of *Manna*) appear later, and furnish criteria of a book's lateness. The transition from *Eleh* in the earlier Scriptures and Ezra, to *Illeyn* in Daniel and the Targums, is complete; whatever its analogies, fancied or real, in external dialects.

Enough of these variations here to show that they are not insignificant; they may not, apart from all other circumstances, have a force approaching to demonstration; their tendency is to indicate in Daniel a stage of language subsequent to Ezra, and advancing in the direction of the Targums. The greater the differences are, the more favourably shall we be able hereafter to judge of the author's

¹ Little as my argument needs it, I might suggest a hope of mercy for a philologist who should doubt the doctrine that the singular DeN and the plurals DeNaN and ILleyN have the same element in their termination; even if he appealed with dubious success to such forms as *Mah* and *Man*, *Dagah* and *Dagan*, *Nadah* and *Nadan*, *Gachah* (?) and *Gechan*, for a different explanation. The question of Daniel and Ezra does not turn on euphonic mutation, but on Biblical priority. If James I. spoke ever so old Scotch, it might be late English. But, *virī doctī sententiæ ut assentiar, a me non impetro*.

directness in writing suitably to his time ; whereas, on the less favourable supposition of his designedly imitating Ezra, we might find no differences.

A more striking, and for general readers available, characteristic of style as indicating age, may be found in the numerous Iranian, or Indo-European, words which occur in the book under consideration. An useful list of these has been appended, with the assistance of Professor Müller, to Dr. Pusey's recent lectures. In order however that the student may derive from this list all the instruction which it is capable of affording, he should remember a circumstance of which neither the divine nor the philologist has informed him, that Persian would have been as strange to Nebuchadnezzar, as Greek. We are not dealing with Ezra, who lived under Artaxerxes, but with an author supposed to represent the Syro-Chaldean age of Babylon. If anything is known of the distribution of languages and races, we know for certain, that the indigenous Babylonians of Nebuchadnezzar's age (if not of all ages, for Mr. Rawlinson's supposed discovery would not here affect us) were of that Syro-Arabian race, at the head of which the Bible places Chesed, father of the Chasdim or Chaldæans, and whose patriarch is Shem.¹ So the priests or astrologers (chap. ii. v. 4) are made to address the king

¹ This is fully discussed in 1 Vater's *Adelung*, with which may be compared Rosenmüller's Note on Habbacuc i., the opinion in Layard's *Nineveh*, ii. p. 237, and the Article by Mr. Bevan on *Tongues, Dispersion &c.*, in Smith's *Bibl. Dict.* The most recent philologist on the Kurdish side seems to be M. Renan, whom I might hesitate to contradict, if I had not observed (*Lang. Sémi.*, p. 66), that he quotes among his authorities Mr. Layard, who has expressly summed up for the Semitic theory ; while the difficulty, to my own mind very great, of making Abraham a Kurd, and the weight of the Mosaic genealogies, which I am not neologist enough to desert with Dr. Pusey, unless much graver reason compelled me, confirmed too, as these are by the Aramaic of Daniel, almost conclude the question. In truth, M. Renan's undoubted accomplishments as an Orientalist do not preserve him from a proneness to conjecture in more provinces than one. He does not make the Chaldees priests ; so that his alliance with Dr. Pusey is imperfect.

Aramith, or *Συριοστὶ*, and (not to dwell on Strabo's identification (lib. xvi.) of the terms Syrian and Assyrian) the existence of our Aramaic Chaldee in large portions of this book is both significantly dramatic and conclusive as to the author's conception of Chaldæan ethnology. The supposition of an intrusive warrior caste of Kurds, though it has had an occasional place among the conjectures of scholars, and though it is now convenient to a class of writers who lately called it "infidel," is on wider grounds more justly set aside. Those who hold it, can least explain, how a position like that of the Turkish troops under the Arabian Caliphs could be that of a learned caste of astronomers.

How then are we to explain the occurrence of Iranian, *i.e.* Indo-European, words in Daniel? The opening verses give, in connection with a decree of Nebuchadnezzar's, *partemim* (*i.e.* nobles), akin to the Sanscrit *prathama*, Pehlvi *pardom*. There are many others, an explanation of which was attempted by Dr. Jahn in his excellent Introduction to the Old Testament, and gently criticised by his episcopal editor in America. It was taken from Dr. Jahn by Dr. Mill in his publication as "Christian Advocate," and is taken from Dr. Mill by Bishop Cotton,¹ of Calcutta, who now sends it from Asia to Europe as a novel discovery, which it is only wonderful should not be known to an essayist who had considered and, out of respect for some of its advocates, passed it over in silence. No chronology brings Cyrus to Babylon before 540. Suppose him there in 536. Daniel would be at least eighty, approaching ninety years of age (i. 1-3). If he equalled the highest historical instances of longevity, it would be a strange employment for one on the brink of the grave, first to

¹ I prefer a glance at Bishop Cotton's philological discoveries to one at his personal judgments; though the latter, especially in so far as they blame a clergyman for imputing to "the great body of believers" certain exaggerations, which the clergyman had complained of as exceptionally exacted from himself, in an age when the great body of educated believers had expressly or tacitly surrendered them, exemplify in a memorable measure what the good bishop justly calls "the guilt of misrepresentation."

learn Persian, then to translate into it portions of his former work, and the edicts of Nebuchadnezzar. Would such a procedure be even consistent with inspiration? Without wearying the reader on this point, I trust a moment's reflection will show him, that Iranian words, *e.g.* *Partemim*, *Sagan*, *Sarbal* (*i.e.* *braccæ*, Gr. *σπαράβα*), *Achashdarpenim* (satraps), etc., etc., tend greatly to strengthen any previous presumption in favour of the later date assigned to the Book of Daniel.

We have not yet exhausted our linguistic indications. Having never myself consented to vote for depriving the word *kitharas* of its Greek citizenship, I rejoice to see Professor Müller set aside the desperate attempts to make it Persian. Here the question is not, whether a stray Greek term might float from Ionia to Babylon; but, how came other books of the Bible, even those written at Babylon, to call a harp by its Hebrew name *kinor* (comp. *Cinyras*), and only the one which external evidence places after Alexander's conquest, to use the Greek word *kithara* (in what was probably its genitive form, though punctuated *caythros*)? Ezekiel, captive by Chebar's stream, wrote *kinoraych*, thy harp; those daughters of Zion who remembered their past tears at Babylon, had hung, they say, "*kinorotheynou*, our harps," upon the trees that were there. In Daniel the Hebrew word has vanished; a Greek substitute appears. If this were not enough, we find the word *pesanteeryn*, or *psanteryon*, which, whether its peculiar form be certainly, or but probably, connected by Gesenius with the Macedonian use of N for L (mentioned by Gregory of Corinth) must in any case be a modification of the Greek *psalterion*.¹ That a gentleman has

¹ Compare the Homeric *γέντο* for *ἔλετο*. Doric *βεντίον* for *βελτίον*, *βέντιστος* for *βελτιστος*. The Doric usage does not exclude the Macedonian, but renders it probable. The word *ψαλτήριον* could not have come from the Dorians, for it was not a Dorian name, but was a comparatively modern substitute for the older name *μάγαδις*, which meant the lyre with some special number of strings. See Athenæus, xiv. p. 636 (v. 309, Schweighäuser). Dr. Pusey must pardon this correction, which I would have spared, if his extreme confidence had not taken such a tone

been found to suggest a Semitic root PSaL, proves so little about the Greek inflexion, which was the point, that it is difficult to imagine the suggestion serious, though Reviews applaud it. The word SamBuCa retains too much trace of its Asiatic original to be urged, though it is probably on its return as a visitor from Greece, as our own adoption from France of *boire* (*bibere*), if for an illustration's sake I may so far follow Voss, does not prevent our restoring it in the form *la bière*. A more certain word is Soumphonía, of which, notwithstanding the alternative writing Siphonia, I should feel the force needed no argument, if it were not eminently significant, that Polybius (Athenæ, x. p. 439) mentions Antiochus (the tyrant symbolised by Nebuchadnezzar) as dancing to the *symphony*, whether one instrument, or more; Polybius, I think, meant it of one; as also did Livy. But what shall we say of Ashaphim; the wise men, or diviners? Hebrew lexicographers seldom scruple to invent roots, and in the comparatively modern colluvies, called Syriac, the word has been adopted out of Daniel. No Semitic warrant for it approaches within ages the time required for a precedent unless any one chooses to make it a dialectic variation of the Hebrew *Cashaph*. A more probable clue is furnished by the frequent recurrence of *σόφος* in the LXX. Ashaph, I suspect, can only be Sophos, and it bears to its Greek original the same relation as the Hebrew *Ani*, a ship, bears to its Greek and Sanscrit cognate *Nau-s*. I will not urge barer possibilities; if the above instances exhaust the Greek words in Daniel, they present, standing alone, a chronological suggestion, which with accompanying circumstances may be a link of proof. If they were possible under Nebuchadnezzar, they are natural after Alexander.

5. To the common sense of the multitude a consideration of the subject-matter of the book may furnish plainer ground. There will be found in the following treatise abundant evidence of rebuke, not sparing even St. Gregory, a bishop and a Father, as well as a grammarian.

dence that the four kingdoms described in symbol by Daniel are Babylonian, Persian, and Macedonian, with either a Median as the second, or the Seleucid dynasty of Syria (and possibly its Egyptian contemporaries) as the fourth. Either alternative leaves the "little horn" as the well-known, widely-acknowledged, representation of Epiphanes, who in his love of Greek fashion thought to change Semitic times and seasons, and who raised by his insults the splendid outburst of fanatical valour which is the glory of the Maccabees. Expositors so unlike as Porphyry and Jerome¹ agree so nearly as this: the one supposes Daniel to describe Antiochus; the other prefers Antichrist under the type of Antiochus; in either view, a knowledge of Antiochus is presupposed. All introductions into the text of the Ottoman empire or the Pope—as a primary meaning—as an historical form which the writer gives to his thought, may safely be set aside. Some few scholars may conceive allusion to Antiochus a proof that the book was as late as his age; a far larger number of divines imagine the predictive form in which the allusion is conveyed abundantly demonstrative that the book existed earlier; otherwise, they say it would be deceptive.² A middle, and a

¹ Hieron. in Dan. vii., viii.

² A most reverend writer has said upon St. Luke: "It is painful to remark, how the opinions of many commentators who *refuse to fix* the date of this Gospel earlier than the destruction of Jerusalem, have been influenced by the determination that nothing like prophecy shall be found in it. Believing that our Lord did really prophesy that event, we have no *difficulty* in believing that an evangelist reported the prophecy before it was fulfilled." Now, supposing his grace to know by inspiration, or otherwise, the motives of commentators, who might have deduced their apparent axiom from previous instances, the laws of thought still permit us to see a correspondent assumption on his grace's side. Granting that there are truths to which our assent properly commences in volition, it is not clear that the existence of a prediction for near half a century before an event, if it is not attested until half a century after the event, belongs to such an order of truths. At all events, the acceptance of such a prediction is too much a result of faith or volition, to be a foundation. It does not furnish that proof, for the sake of which it was alleged. I only borrow here an illustration of reasoning, the two cases being manifoldly unlike in themselves.

moderate, course is, to ask on behalf of a book, for which prediction is claimed, that some evidence, or a probability, however slight, of its existence anterior to the event, should be shown. We have seen, in the case of Daniel, the external evidence against a date earlier than Antiochus. While this remains so, it is respectful to hope the "intention" was not "deceptive," in a practice which even Christian poets, Tasso, and our own Spenser, and Geoffry, who was a bishop, have sanctioned ; and which can hardly surprise us in a lower age, two centuries before the Christian era, when it is known to have existed largely among Jews and Gentiles. The books of the Sibylline Prophecies,¹ formerly ranked by Church authority with David's Psalms, may exemplify the habit for the Greeks, the Book of Enoch (the date of which I do not presume to fix) for the Jews, and Virgil's sixth *Æneid* for the Romans. If the divinest inspiration is shown by many instances to include the free spontaneity of poetry, parable, apologue, patriotism, and passion, we cannot, antecedently to investigation, assume that it must exclude a play of imagination in prose, which we might call dramatic, but consistent with the modes of thought of that age, and of many ages. At least, on the side of "evidences," the predictive or symbolical form, in which the Book of Daniel enfolds its allusions to the period of Antiochus, is not sufficient to counteract the tendency of those allusions in fixing the date as contemporary or subsequent to Antiochus.

It would be a departure from the principles which govern this inquiry (and are inculcated by me elsewhere) to assume that the presence of miracles in a narrative disproves its genuineness or its authenticity. Still, there are narratives in Daniel, which even upon comparison with other miracles in the Old Testament retain a certain air of strangeness ; and in proportion as things are strange, they require more evidence ; whereas here the evidence is less than usual ; thus the book being on other accounts questioned, if we proceed to ask what

¹ *Oracula Sibyllina*. Friedlieb. Lipsiæ, 1852.

inherent verification is afforded by such narratives as represent the fire not burning, and the lions not rending, the answer can hardly avoid a tone of suspicion, which would make us rejoice to find such an interval of clapse between the author and his subject-matter, as on independent grounds we have already found. This would be stated more strongly by those who magnify the presumption in favour of an Order of Nature into a certainty that exceptions from that order are precluded by its Divine Author's all-sufficing omniscience. There is so little likelihood of that view's being confounded by any sincere mind with my own, that I may venture to say, it does not appear to me contemptible. It deserves more respectful treatment than the triple series of prejudications,—Miracles are necessary; Miracles must have occurred; All records of Miracles must be placed, even without evidence, in such an order of time as may render them available proofs. There is more consistency in saying with the physical philosopher, Miracles, as we enlarge our grasp upon Nature, become less probable; and with the critical historian, Records of miracle ought to be vigilantly scrutinised; yet in no less maintaining, as a Christian divine, Nothing is impossible with God; and, at the same time, if all the miracles of the Bible are undoubted and literal history, our faith in the Supernatural does not depend upon them, since to ground faith in sensuous miracle is that very materialism which Christ rebuked in Nicodemus¹ (St. John iii. 2, 5, 10).

¹ If Bishop Warburton and Archdeacon Hare (comp. "Mission of the Comforter," pp. 212, 354-68) are adequate representatives of the two schools, to one of which the foundation of faith seems phenomenal, and to the other spiritual, we not only see that both schools are equally bound to produce historical evidence, and to limit their affirmations in accordance with it, so that it is the merest polemical artifice to ascribe to the spiritualist rather than the phenomenalist any "assumptions" derogatory to history; but in fact the spiritual school has often been the stronger on the historical ground. We shall not arrive at an understanding, until the impartial neutrality of the intellect is guaranteed by an habitual distinction between things historical or ratiocinative, which are subject-matter of

I hasten reluctantly by many questions of interest connected with Daniel, a discussion of which would swell this Introduction into a treatise. It is disputed, whether the emphasis with which almsgiving and ascetic practices are prescribed, marks a stage of Judaism intermediate between the Old Testament and the New. At least it is in perfect consonance with a period, when the received interpretation of righteousness as almsgiving (See Beza, Mill, Elsley, on St. Matt. vi. 1) shows the natural sentiment of a "blessing on him who considereth the poor" passing into that more formal code on the subject, which finds countenance in the infant Christianity of the Gospels, and which, though firmly rejected by St. Paul, has been revived in parts of Christendom. A more difficult inquiry is, how far Zoroastrianism appears? So much is certain, that names and other distinctions of an angelic hierarchy come forward in a way unknown to the older Scriptures; if this change may be ascribed to a fresh revelation, it is more naturally explained by contact with a faith likely to have suggested it, and of high antiquity, although the books which now present it to us do not yet admit a settlement of their age or interpretation. The bearings of a great argument are not affected by the possibility of complicating its collateral or supplementary details. The tendency, as it seems to me, of research up to our own days, from the time when Dean Prideaux¹ conceived of Zoroaster as an apostate Jew, is to magnify the antiquity, importance, and spiritual force of the impulse which the East received, when the great Bactrian reformer scattered the night of Nature from eyes sealed in the slumber of Vedic infancy, and out of the contrast of light and darkness evoked the personalities, or foreshadowed the conflicts, of Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

belief, and things spiritual, which are objects of faith; the latter being tests of character, inasmuch as our relation to them is affected by volition.

¹ Conn. O. N. T. i. 4, with which his account of Judith, i. 1, is curious enough to bear comparison. (Comp. Pusey, p. 97.)

To those who would prosecute this part of the subject, Heeren's Asiatic Researches, cap. ii., Lassen's *Indische Alterthumskunde*, and the brilliant chapters in Gibbon, and in Milman's History of Christianity, with the authorities cited therein, will afford the means of doing so. Von Lengerke's Daniel, and Dr. Pusey's Lectures, may be considered in respect of our entire book as the two authorities standing to each other in strongest antithesis. The view taken by Mr. Desprez occupies an intermediate and moderate position. Those who wish to contrast the two sides, treated moderately, with exact equipoise of ability (and after reading adverse criticisms I can add, with considerable erudition and acumen), may compare two editions of Dr. Davidson,—the first, 1856, maintaining the earlier, and the second, 1863, the later date.

6. There is one branch of evidence, hitherto but glanced at, which deserves consideration from divines of all schools. It depends upon no modern theory, or scholar; is not only "as old as Porphyry," but older. The Greek version,¹ edited from the Vatican and Alexandrian MSS., whether it were originally part of the Septuagint, or were borrowed from any one else, presents in its existing form a Book of Daniel between Ezekiel and the Maccabees. This Book of Daniel commences with the apocryphal narrative of Susannah; proceeds subsequently, so as not to need remark, to the third chapter, in which a long prayer of Azarias is introduced, and the song which we call "the Song of the Three Children." Nebuchadnezzar hearing them sing, is astonished (as he might well be), and rises up in haste. The book then proceeds until the end of the twelfth chapter, when Astyages the Mede (whom the writer probably identified with "Darius") dies, and Cyrus the Persian succeeds. Then comes the story of Bel and the Dragon, followed by that of Habbacuc the Prophet, who is borne through the air by the hair of his head, in order to carry food to Daniel in the den of lions. A brief recital of Daniel's deliverance closes the book. When Porphyry read this collection of stories, he

¹ Oxonii, MDCCCXVII. Accedit Introductio Carpzovii.

fairly argued, that it must have been written in Greek, since the first tale of Susannah contains two Greek puns (*σχίῳου* and *σχίσει, πρίῳου* and *πρίσαι*). His argument is adopted by our orthodox apologists, as a reason to the Church of Rome for our not accepting the Apocrypha. Jerome fairly answered, that the Greek puns in Susannah do not affect the portion of Daniel which is found in the Hebrew. His answer is generally accepted. Still, he did not explain, why in the third chapter Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste—a phenomenon, of which the Greek, with its Song of the Three Children, supplies an account: while the Hebrew, with its omission of that song, supplies none. Hence it is an open though neglected, question, whether the Greek be not, after all, the original of Daniel; or to speak more closely to probability, whether it does not represent an ancient collection of stories, out of which the Hebrew compiler in the Macbean age selected the most dignified for the purpose of encouraging his countrymen to trust in the Lord God of their fathers; not expecting them to inquire, nor nicely inquiring for himself, how much was documentary, and how much traditional. This view would explain, why *Citharas* appears in the genitive case; why such words as *Sophos* are retained; especially, why *Upharsin* is absent from the Greek text, though introduced into the Hebrew; its absence being more consistent than its presence, with the conception, originally native to the writer, that the Iranian dynasty in Babylon began with the Medes, and was transferred to the Persians. Why should it be more startling for Greek elements to find a way into the Hebrew Canon, than for the New Testament to be in Greek? or to take a more exact analogy, for the Greek of Aquila and Theodotion to be imitated or replaced, as is believed, by the Hebrew transformations¹ of Onkelos and Jonathan? Can any better explanation be given of the circumstance, that Daniel's interpretation, v. 26–28, corresponds with the three

¹ Geiger, pp. 162–163, Urschrift. Breslau, 1857. Compare Carpzovius, as above, p. lxxxvii.

words of the Greek, but not with the four words of the Hebrew and English? Priority on part of the Greek would be an explanation; and more so, if we remember the Hebrew fondness for rhythmical response.

Tempting as may be that hypothesis, it would have difficulties of its own, and should not divert us from certainties; especially since to native inheritors of the Hebrew, who claim a Hebrew original even for Susannah, it will hardly be welcome. At all events, the incorporation of legendary stories in the Greek Daniel proves how little the idea of sacredness prevented such a thing, on the strictest theory, in this case; or need have prevented it in the case of the older Prophets, on the theory of their having received Daniel as a late addition. The argument from "deception," the most invidious of all to answer, is destroyed by our Deutero-Canonical books, especially by such as the Book of Wisdom, called of Solomon, the author of which writes with every appearance of piety, yet does not scruple in his eighth and ninth chapters to personate the son of David. An older, a more absolutely canonized, instance of the same practice is presented in the Book of Ecclesiastes. It is entitled "The words of the Preacher, the Son of David, king of Jerusalem." Some may restrict the force of this title by understanding it to imply only a representation of the character of Solomon: that the authorship does not belong to Solomon, is allowed too generally for argument upon it to be needful. If the adoption of character seem more innocent than the invention of incidents, I am not contending for the latter; although examples of it, without going so far as the *Cyropædia* of Xenophon, abound in Jewish books of the period to which Daniel probably belongs.

A friend once pointed out to me that the force of these considerations is much increased by a comparison of the Coptic version of Daniel. On proceeding to an examination of this, I found it framed upon the basis of the Greek, and divided into thirteen divisions, of which Susannah is the first; although it seems that by an act of judgment which, without

disrespect to a man of learning, it may be permitted to think mistaken, the portions absent from the Hebrew have been placed in Archdeacon Tattam's edition of the Coptic¹ at the end, under the head of "*Additions to Daniel*." The most remarkable point is, that at the end of the thirteenth vision appears a fourteenth, in which the four Empires are re-cast into the forms of the Persian, Roman, Byzantine, and Saracenic. Whether the writer of this fresh vision were inspired, or uninspired (though it is hard to say, why that Spirit which taught all nations of the earth their languages should have any of its gifts confined to one language, or two), he conceived of Daniel, as of a book to which such an addition might not irreverently be made, and thereby gave some indication of what nature he conceived the book to be, and rendered it easier for us to throw off the invidious topic of deception. Nothing is more usual with Rabbinical writers, both Jewish and Christian, than to re-adapt prophecies, whose aspect was originally contemporaneous, to fresh events and new enemies; but this Coptic addition is more creative in its spirit, and its place in Daniel eminently suggestive.

On returning from a comparison of the Versions, and of the Deutero-Canonical books, to the Daniel of our Canon, the reader will be less surprised at the fragmentary and half-coherent plan on which this is composed. Since he is told, "not even a rationalist now believes" that the materials of the work are not all of the same age, he may be less disturbed on finding such an impression suggested to him by the book itself; at least, the unchronological order in which visions belonging to Belshazzar's period follow the mention of Darius, and the third year of Cyrus is appended to a career which

¹ Prophetæ Majores, in dialecto ling. Ægypt. Memphiticâ sen Copticâ edidit Henricus Tattam, S.T.P. Oxonii, MDCCCLII. In the third chapter, the Editor has permitted the cause of Nebuchadnezzar's astonishment to appear more fully than in the Hebrew. The word *Upharsin* in chap. v. is wanting. As this passes through the press, I observe a possible subject for comparison, in the Persian Targum mentioned by Mr. Deutsch at p. 1664 of Smith's *Dict. Bibl.*

had been previously implied to end in the first of Cyrus, may be observed as indications of such a thing, however much a loose unity may seem given by the final compiler. Also, the important suggestion arises, that although our Church, in search of a boundary which should limit sources of necessary doctrine, determined wisely to make that boundary conterminous with the Hebrew Canon, we are not justified on grounds of religious philosophy, or of literature, in making all within that boundary Divine, nor all external to it destitute of a Divine element. Let us at length learn, the Spirit bloweth where it listeth.

The English reader, who imagines that a book invariably retains the shape in which it first left its author's hand, may be asked to consider some instances to the contrary. It is said, though I have not ascertained it by comparison, that Jeremy Taylor's *Liberty of Propheying* underwent considerable changes in the edition after the Restoration. I have observed in Professor Blunt's *Sketch of the English Reformation*, a gradual raising of the ecclesiastical tone in successive editions, from the old Anglican Protestantism of the earlier to the pronounced Anglo-Catholicism of the later; yet the change is produced by very minute variations of phrase. A more marked instance is Dr. Cooke Taylor's *Manual of Modern History*. Numerous passages, containing reflections or anecdotes, chiefly of that kind which conductors of educational establishments a quarter of a century ago thought proper, but which amidst the stronger ecclesiasticism of our day seem less proper, have been gradually withdrawn. Some of these changes (neither the authority nor fitness of which do I for a moment question), have been made subsequently to the author's death. If it be said that books employed in education enjoy a peculiar license of epitome, the *Chronicles of our Middle Ages* present a more striking and instructive instance. Any one who compares the *Flores Historiarum* and other specimens from Bede to Rudborne, many of them edited by Dr. Giles, will find large passages adopted by the later from

the earlier, but with such freedom of recasting as the later writer's opportunities or inclination suggested. The circumstances under which some of our chronicles were written, in religious societies, or with an eye to some special cause, with little care to preserve the author's name, and with occasional conjecture to supply the absence of record of authorship, are so analogous, if not parallel, to those under which our Canonical and Deutero-Canonical writings came in succession into being, that some resemblances in the uncertainty of authorship or compilation cannot surprise us. My reader will be good enough to observe, that I am here introducing only an illustration. The proof of the thing illustrated is to be found in a comparison of the Book of Daniel, as our Bible gives it, with the other versions: *e.g.* with either the Vulgate or the Septuagint; the last mentioned has been done in the Appendix to Dr. Pusey's volume, though not nearly in so instructive a manner as any intelligent reader will do it for himself.

It may be asked, are not the words *Canon*, *Canonical*, *Deutero-Canonical*, a sufficient condemnation of such ideas as are here suggested, whether a Greek original, or traditional stories, or even innocent compilation, or gradual addition? Certainly, if the word canonical meant, as we have been told, "written by the special and miraculous interposition of the Almighty," we should be driven to imagine that the interposition, although miraculous, had taken place with a singular adaptation to the appearance of a natural occurrence. Again if there were the slightest colour of any other than a rhetorical foundation for the statement that *Canonicity* is by the native pregnancy of the term a synonym for *Inspiration*, the last word being taken in the most exaggerated sense, we might seem forbidden to investigate the instrumentality of circumstance, with which He, who is the Foreseer and Arbiter of events, as well as Inspirer of thoughts, introduced his manifold lessons into the world.

Unfortunately for all such theories—which, even if a violent straining of law could have extorted authority for them,

would have remained without foundation in literature—but happily for the truth of religion, and welfare of the Church, the well-known meaning of the word *Canon*, in relation to objects enumerated under it, is a list. When Ptolemy placed in his “Canon” the names of certain Babylonian kings, he was not aware that by making these monarchs canonical, he was constituting them, for the province of York, plenarily inspired. He ignorantly thought, he was only stamping them genuine, by placing them in the list. Sir Henry Rawlinson and his brother equally give us canons, *i.e.* lists, of Assyrian kings, but have not yet inferred inspiration from their canonicity. Within the Christian Church, the historical sense, as distinct from devout rhetoric formerly, and litigation of late, has never been doubtful. Athanasius spoke of books canonised, and un-canonised; thereby showing the subject-matter of canonisation to be not “the faith and manners of Christians,” but the books en-listed, or enumerated. Bishop Marsh, whose authority may be higher in criticism than in doctrine, laid down with a direct eye to both sides of the question, that ‘in the writings of the Fathers of the fourth and following centuries, after the number of sacred books which were to be read in the churches had been determined by public authority, the word canon signifies a list, or a catalogue.’ After exemplifying this from Gregory, of Nazianzus, he proceeds: “Canonical books signify properly those admitted by public authority into the catalogue of writings destined for the service of the Church; and (though their divine origin was considered as a necessary qualification to entitle them to this admission, yet) the words *Canonical* and *Inspired* are by no means synonymous.” 1 Michaëlis, pp. 375, 376. A writer, who passes as Cranmer, though his materials, but not their arrangement, may have come from the Archbishop, says, “We believe the holy canon of the Bible, because that the primitive Church of the Apostles and eldest writers, and next to their time, approved them in their REGISTER, that is, in their writings, which partly saw and

partly heard them from the Apostles." *Confut. Unwr. Verities*, p. 59. Here with a writer, whose slightly Genevan tone already verges more toward the identification of the Word and the Record, than either our General Exhortation and Absolution, taken together, or the habitual recognition by Cranmer and Latimer of the *Gospel* as the Word, or the spirit of Hooker's second book would suggest, we still find *register* used either as the synonym, or, on the least favourable construction, as the determinant of the canon. Such is in connexion with Scripture, the historical, as distinct from the polemical, meaning of the word canon. I have too recently argued this verbal question under singularly painful circumstances to care to linger over it. The thoughtful reader will understand, that the Church, as other societies, enjoys a right to enumerate the books which she will read in her assemblies, or stamp with doctrinal authority ; that as a religious society she would naturally place on her list, books fullest of the spirit of that faith which it is her mission to keep alive ; that there may be a probability, greater in the eye of her children than in that of mere enquirers, that her selection will be divinely guided, or proceed upon a well-weighed claim of antecedent sacredness ; yet that the mere canonicity, or enrolment on the list of the Church, in itself determines nothing as to the inherent quality, whether human or divine, of the book enrolled ; that the canonization of books of different kinds, a history, a tradition, a chronicle, a psalm, a parable (and though I hardly like to add it, possibly a legend¹), recom-

¹ Has any one shown why a legend need be less inspired than a genealogy, or a chronicle? Might it not be more so? especially if unconsciousness of feigning be what distinguishes it from moral tale. Among a people of strong idioms of speech, such as "bowing down to idols," "passing through fire and water," being "saved out of the mouth of the lion," the literature may be so tinged by them, as to make interpretation more a feeling than a certainty. All I would ask, in such a case, is that things of the highest spiritual import should not be made dependent upon doubtfulness, or literary possibility. My own question is rather of fidelity of statement.

mends to us each on its own ground, and leaves us free to discriminate each ; not willingly excluding any from that breath of God, by which all things noble and pure live, and have being ; yet suffering us to think that the fierceness of man in some parts praises God less acceptably than the more excellent way in others ; and that as the liveliest record of an inspired community left us in either Testament discloses traces of infirmity (1 Cor. xiv. 23-32), so analogous traces of a humanity not bereft of God, but working imperfectly under his influence, may stamp the sacred writings of the Canon. Thus, if the Church of the Maccabean period had seen her afflicted children roused by tales current among them of by-gone suffering or deliverance, she might enroll a well-weighed selection of such tales in her list, for future edification ; thus the book, especially if its tales of older tyrants were cast into parables with a vein of covert allusion to the living tyrant, would mark the history of the time which adopted it, if only the traditions of an older time. I do not write with a view of unduly exalting the Church, still less a special order within it ; nor do I apprehend the question of inspiration to be in this stage of our enquiry affected ; whatever theory of inspiration we hold, from the strongest to the weakest, it is certain that the inner gift was accompanied by Divine Providence with an outward instrumentality of circumstance ; and religious societies, even if the cry of their guilt in crushing the personal conscience has gone up horrible before God, have yet played an important part in educating individuals, collecting their devotions, elaborating their experiences in the form of an historical canon. Our business was with testimony as to the age of the Book of Daniel ; but the question was difficult to disentangle from various ecclesiastical considerations.

7. Let us sum up the case. Our masters of reasoning, whether profound as Butler, or narrowly acute as Whately, have taught us that practical conviction may depend, not on a single line of proof, but on an accumulation of particulars, some of them collateral to each other. So the proof of the

later of the dates assigned to the Book of Daniel does not depend solely on the testimony of the Jewish Church, though that Church placed it among her latest writings ; it is not merely the silence of witnesses anterior to the Maccabees, though some one of the Canonical writers, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, or of the Deutero-Canonical, as the Son of Sirach, in giving a sort of list of the Prophets, might well have mentioned the book, if it had been known to them ; it is not only that if allusions are at all traceable, it is rather from Daniel back to Zechariah ; it is not that the Chaldee of Daniel permits itself to be marked off by clear shades of variation from that of Ezra ; nor that Iranian words stand out with significant prominence upon a page to which the earlier date would suppose them unknown ; nor even that Greek words, and those not merely musical names, defy all attempts to explain them away ; again, it is not merely that prediction requires some slight indication of its existence anterior to the event predicted : (far less will any one who habitually governs his affirmations by evidence, ascribe to the author of the present argument any assumption of the impossibility, or even *à priori* unlikelihood of prediction :) nor is it only, that some of the narratives in Daniel are peculiarly strange, and unlike most of the Old Testament miracles, but like those of the secondary canon, with which also the external evidence of the age of their record associates them : (far less has the present author given reason for being seriously supposed to deny the possibility, or historical reality of miraculous occurrences, or shown any wish to disprove them :) nor again, is it merely that the ancient Versions, the Greek and Coptic, and the Vulgate in its representation of Theodotion present in the case of Daniel peculiar and exceptional phenomena ; and that these are of a kind suggesting the idea of a collection of stories, rather than the unity of a contemporaneous record ; nor is it altogether, that the manners are Persian more than Babylonian, the religion Judaising rather than Hebrew, the angelic names novel and

possibly of Zoroastrian suggestion; nor simply that the history, though put in such a predictive form as the third book of the Sibylline Oracles, contemporary with the Maccabees, exemplifies, is still history, written with a patriotic object, and history reaching to about that date, at which the external evidence of the Hebrew Church (and of Hebrew scholars, who are not bold to accumulate exploded errors), would lead us to place the origin of the book—the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes—the death of the heroic¹ and anointed Maccabee—the struggle, still dubious, for the free worship of God in Zion, against a foolish man blaspheming daily; nor once more, is it only that Livy and Polybius ascribe to Antiochus what Daniel ascribes to Nebuchadnezzar, while Psalms apparently contemporaneous illustrate, and receive light from, this view of the origin of the book, to which so many particulars tend in convergence—it is the accumulation of all these things in the aggregate which constitutes something very like a proof of the later date of the book; a proof of such a kind as our Maker has rendered it difficult for the human mind to resist: one to which we may resign ourselves without fear that He who knoweth whereof we are made, will blame his children for so doing; and in reliance upon which we turn from partisan maledictions, saying to Him, LORD, *though they curse, yet bless Thou*. Our trust in doing so will be justified, in proportion as our enquiry has been upon legitimate ground, without assumption opposed to any part, or evidence, of revelation. We should have still to learn the meaning of Revelation at the feet of Christ, if we fancied it

¹ The 30th chapter of Livy's 41st book is in favour of "the anointed one cut off without help, or successor," being Seleucus Philopator. "Seleucus insidiis Heliodori, unius ex purpuratis, oppressus interiit." Nor is the description of Antiochus in the two following chapters unimportant: "Antiochus . . . pravus et inconsultus fuit . . . ipse statim *cum poculo et symphonia* improvisus aderat, commissabundus et lasciviens," etc. It is not, however, unreasonable to prefer applying the term Anointed to a Jewish prince or priest; and Mr. Desprez believes himself to have found one appropriate. (This view has been since abandoned.)

to imply merit or duty in swerving an iota from historical probability.

But is there nothing on the other side ? There is a passage in Josephus, A. J. xi. 8, which declares that the high-priest Jaddua, having appeared in a dream to Alexander, while yet in Macedonia, and encouraged him to conquer Asia, subsequently on his march from Tyre to Jerusalem showed him also the Book of Daniel, in which he had been predicted. I can add nothing to what two historians of Greece, the first manfully,¹ the second enigmatically, have suggested upon this passage. But if we consider that the military companions of Alexander, so far as their testimony is delivered to us through good writers, knew nothing of this march to Jerusalem, or of its results, and that Arrian may be interpreted as negating it, we may wonder how Josephus, four centuries afterwards, was able to dress up the particulars so fully ; say, we admit some act of grace to have furnished a foundation for the tradition, and even go so far as to imagine any part of the Old Testament shown to Alexander, it does not follow that Josephus might not conjecture Daniel as a part likely to be shown ; and when we add the obliquity of the man's character, atoning for flattery of the Romans, by exaggerations as to the country and creed which he had deserted, the whole passage becomes suspicious for reliance, if not damaging.

It has been attempted to find a testimony of a far different order in the language of the New Testament. We read in

¹ Mitford, chap. xlviii. § iv. (vol. vii. p. 534) ; Thirlwall, chap. 1. (vol. vii. p. 206) ; Comp. Lord A. Hervey, in Jaddua, *Dict. Bibl.* Some features in Josephus's account of the Fall of Jerusalem (such as the μεταβαίνωμεν ἐντεῦθεν) are suspiciously like some in Alexander's siege of Tyre, though doubtless common in many ancient cities ; as Servius teaches on Æneid, ii. 358 :

(Excessere omnes adytis arisque relictis
Di, quibus imperium hoc steterat ; succurritis urbi
Incensæ)

where Burmann makes the parenthesis stop too soon.

Matt. xxiv. 15 (corroborated by a doubtful reading in Mark xiii. 14) that "the abomination of desolation" which the Jews should see in the last days of Jerusalem had been "spoken of by Daniel the Prophet." This passage is employed, as if it brought the whole authority of Christ and of God into the field in favour of the earlier date of the book, and of such interpretations as exclude a proper reference to the times of Antiochus. Is not such employment of it a carrying of the Ark of God, unbidden, into the battle? Certainly the passage proves the canonical reception of Daniel at the time of the Gospel's being written, and we may fairly assume, at that of Christ's speaking; but that such canonical reception was then established, and had been so for a full century, is what no critic calls in question. The passage may also prove that the standards of Titus on the walls, or the statue of Caligula in the Temple, brought home to the Jews a vivid fulfilment of an old prophetic saying. I discern no approach to even an indication, that the book had originated in the time of Nebuchadnezzar rather than of Epiphanes; or that the "abomination of desolation" was not formally recognised by our Lord as denoting acts of Antiochus which were before the eyes of the writer of the Book of Daniel, and which accurately typified those of Caligula and Titus. We cannot too carefully observe in Matt. xxiv. 15 (where it is not important that the citation is tinged by the Greek *βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως*) the remarkable phrase, "*let the reader understand.*" The most approved explanation of these words, apart from controversy, is, that they point out the symbolical adaptation of an ancient image to something new, which could not be more distinctly expressed. So possibly in Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar may stand for Epiphanes: certainly in the Apocalypse Babylon stands for Rome. If this be so (and there seems neither Scripture nor reason against it), the authority of Christ and of the written Gospels comes round to be in favour of the natural interpretation, which finds a description of the abominations of Antiochus

in Daniel, yet acknowledges it, in the Gospel, applied to the Romans. It can hardly be grudged as a concession that Christ unquestionably describes the Baptist under the title of Elias; this alone furnishes a clue to a series of difficulties. It is therefore needless to urge, that the New Testament quotes Zechariah under the name of the Prophet Jeremy, calls our second Psalm the first Psalm, describes the rock of water as not only refreshing, but following the Israelites through the wilderness; although any consideration of the manner in which our Lord's words are reported, and of the interval which, with a growing consent of critics,¹ is thought to have intervened between their utterance and their compilation, may suggest the un-wisdom of exaggerating the burden which they are to bear. If we lived in a time when there were no difficulty in making good the contemporaneity of the narratives, such a burden as that of proving the Babylonian date of Daniel might be much; as it is, we should rejoice that we need not ask it to be borne.

These are, I believe, the only two arguments antecedent to such as arise from the interpretation of the book, in favour of the earlier date claimed for its composition. If they have been correctly stated, it would follow that an assertion of the Maccabaic date is forbidden by no law, human or Divine, but may be an exercise of the rights of orthodox Anglicanism; and is not only consistent with a strong sense of responsibility for belief, but may be prompted by it.

The reader will observe, no stress has been laid upon the hopelessness of identifying "Darius the Mede," or upon the half-removed difficulty of the occurrence of no reigning king in Babylon named Belshazzar (which is but a collateral issue),

¹ Westcott's *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, 1860. Réville, *L'Evangile selon St. Mathieu*, 1862. These books, belonging to different schools, are equally marked by fairness. A comparison of the two might enable a reader to understand the *method*, not quite without data, yet not free on either side from arbitrariness, by which that particular enquiry is conducted.

or generally upon such questions (arising, like that of the "Seventy Weeks," out of interpretation), as press with about equal weight against whatever view is taken of the origin of the book. To the defenders, however, of the earlier date, it might seem a problem calling for their especial attention, to explain how Daniel, if he wrote under Nebuchadnezzar, could be comforted by the prospect of a period, which, not commencing until the reign of Artaxerxes, would be as undefined in its commencement as in its end. Suppose he lived under Antiochus; it might console him to have a view of Messiah's coming at the end of certain weeks from the issue of a decree enrolled in history: but if that decree yet lay wrapped in the darkness of the Future's womb, the consolation must have been to him at least an enigma.

8. The critic, employed in the discharge of his sacred office, is not primarily concerned with the consequences of the conclusion to which literature conducts him. Yet in our practical England, and for a clergyman, it is difficult to be altogether deaf to the question, What is to follow from all this research? What is the result of proving that our Book of Daniel must be distinguished from the man Daniel, or that being written in the era of Antiochus, it is one of the latest books, perhaps the last, in the canon of the Old Testament? The first and most obvious result is, to clear up difficulties, and thereby to save the clerical conscience from the burthen of appearing in the eyes of the educated world to be misrepresenting literature for a religious end. We have that crisis of agony, one of the most rousing which ever befell a nation, in which the Jews reclaimed the free use of their Scriptures, and vindicated the shrine of God, brought vividly before our eyes. We see a devout patriot seeking to awaken his own faith, or stimulate that of his countrymen, by going back to stories which he had received of suffering in Babylon: meditating upon ancient promises, and devising for them a fresh explanation, which by analogy, if not otherwise, might suggest fresh hopes for the coming time. If the form which he gave to his aspirations

involves something of imagery, whether angelic or figurative, I do not know that the absence of imagery can be predicated as a necessary condition of inspiration. All Christendom believes Christ to sit at the right hand of God ; yet all thoughtful Christians admit God has no hand such as ours ; they would for the most part add (though I observe such is not the view of some among the later Bampton Lecturers), that the Throne of God is but an image for that presence, which if we go up into heaven, is there ; and if we go down into hell, is there also. Why, then, the author of the Book of Daniel should not typify thoughts annunciative or conjectural of the Divine mercy, in the forms of Gabriel or Michael, I confess myself not to understand. He sees the great empires, or their lordly monarchs, who had most nearly affected the history of his own land, pass in the visions of memory before him. He names to us Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon (chap. ii. 37) ; he appears to designate with equal clearness Alexander of Macedon (chap. viii. 21) : if this is so, he suggests to us that we should interpose as second and third, the Medes and Persians, especially since he seems to have shared (and extended, we know not why, to Babylon) the Greek conception of a Median hegemony in the times preceding Cyrus. If the author of the following treatise should be right in preferring a combination of Syro-Egyptian princes as the fourth (and this is a view in favour of which much may be properly said) : the result is essentially identical, in that the oppressor of Judah, the king of fierce countenance, understanding dark sentences, represents the hateful Epiphanes, as he thought to change the Temple festivals, and wear out the worshippers of Jehovah. The kingdom which succeeds is the Asmonean kingdom, glorified in ideal anticipation, not as the triumph of a dynasty, but as an expression of national independence and religious liberty, while in its time, or in that coming hour, which to the gleaming eye of faith is ever at hand, the inspired writer discerns something greater than an earthly form, a majesty of which all visible kingdoms are but symbols,

a liberty to which human liberty only tends—of all of which he knew not the manner of its coming, but only that it should come, and which in the event came. If we apply to the entire matter the principle laid down by Bishop Butler, that the correspondence of a picture to one object does not necessarily exclude reference to a second object in which a similar correspondence recurs ; then, although we may regret that in this as in other cases Butler proved Christianity to be possible, without proceeding to prove that it was true, we still find ourselves at liberty to believe the nearer or earlier of the two objects to have been in the eye of the painter or writer, however much by a recurrence of likeness or of principle it may have pleased an over-ruling Providence to bring about a potential applicability to a later or remoter object as well. External evidence suggests a probability that the compiler lived in the Maccabaic age ; the correspondence of that age with his picture is almost a proof that he sketched it. How far the certain designation of any ten princes as intended by the “ten horns” is affected by the large number and rapid transitions of the provincial forms through which the fragments of Alexander’s empire flitted ; whether it be permissible to take princes from both Syria and Egypt, or necessary to restrict ourselves to one kingdom ; whether again the writer cared so much for dynasties and kingdoms, as for relations to his own native land—are questions on which I gladly leave to Mr. Desprez the office of instructing the readers of his treatise. Certainly it would be a gratuitous increase of the difficulty, if we thought proper to include all possible satrapies from Epirus to the Punjaub within the horizon of a writer who is describing the fortunes of a city in Judæa. Probably the points remaining as matters of opinion will not in proportion to the extent of the book be so numerous as present themselves in a single verse of Isaiah, without impeding our apprehension of the passage. It is written in Isaiah xiv. 29, that Philistia should not rejoice, because the rod that smote her is broken ; for out of the serpent comes forth a cockatrice.

Here it is doubted, whether the striking rod is Judah, a Jewish king or a king, or general of Assyria ; while as to the cockatrice, there are four corresponding doubts. Yet no interpreter of the passage hesitates to understand Isaiah in that verse as speaking of contemporary objects. So little need the amphibolous nature of details affect the certainty of the general reference. The readers of Mr. Desprez's popular and lucid exposition will probably find the difficulties in Daniel fewer than they expected.

The enigma of the "seventy weeks" retains the doubtfulness incidental to a duration, the interpreters of which are not agreed as to its date of commencing, or of ending. Suppose it to commence with a decree of Artaxerxes, B.C. 460, or 445, and to end during the life or ministry of Christ. It can hardly be reconciled to Hebrew idiom, that *Davar*, the prophetic word, or utterance of a divinely-prompted presentiment, should be applied to a Persian king's decree. Let the English reader compare the twenty-fifth verse of Daniel ix., with the second verse of the same chapter. A comparison of the two verses will put him on the probable track, that the writer was speaking of no Persian decree, but of a word of Jehovah to Jeremiah. It suits all the analogies of Scripture, that Jeremiah, not enduring the sight of Jerusalem desolate, should conceive a divine word for her restoration going forth at each step of her fall. It can hardly be accidental, that just forty-nine or fifty years intervene between the destruction at the commencement of the Captivity, and the advent of Cyrus in Babylon, or the restoration under Zerubbabel, whether we follow the suggestion of Isaiah in calling Cyrus the Anointed, or that of Zechariah in applying the term to Zerubbabel ; and again that from certain epochs of the Captivity to points in the Maccabean struggle should be 434 years ; while the first period gives us seven weeks, and the second gives sixty-two weeks. If we remember that even the calculation of the seventy years at Babylon admits of some disagreement, while the possibility of the omission of Sabbatical years opens room

for discrepancy, we shall find sufficient approximation here to induce us to give an interpreter on this hypothesis a candid hearing; which is all I wish to bespeak for Mr. Desprez. There is a difference in the Hebrew and English punctuation of the passage mentioning the seventy weeks (Daniel ix. 25), which (without arraigning, as Dr. Pusey does, the good faith of either) suggests a possibility that both might be amended. Is there any reason we should not construe thus: vv. 23-26?

“At the beginning of thy supplications the word went forth, and I am come to announce *it* (since thou art *a man of loves*), that thou mayest understand the word, and comprehend the vision: Seventy weeks are determined (?) upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to bring the offence to an end, and to blot out sins, and to cover over iniquity, and to bring in righteousness of ages, and to seal vision and prophecy (?) and to anoint the holy of holies: And that thou mayest know and understand, from the going forth of the word to bring back *captivity* (?) and to restore Jerusalem, to an Anointed *and* a Prince are seven weeks: and for sixty and two weeks shall be builded again street and wall (?); but in distress of times and after the sixty and two weeks shall be cut off *the* Anointed, and for him nought: and the people of the coming prince shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with flood, and to the end of the war is determined desolation.”

The slight change I have ventured to make in the punctuation may assist some readers to understand Mr. Desprez's argument upon the passage. It does not exclude the possibility of other interpretations, or of a distinct one yet to be discovered; nor, in the face of the Regius Professor's disapproval, will I say more than that it seems to me worth considering.

A greater difficulty than any connected with enigmas of weeks may be thought to lie in the anticipation, which the last chapter introduces, of a Resurrection immediately following upon the other events: “*Many that sleep in the dust of the*

earth shall awake" (xii. 2). Are we not hence compelled to throw forward the entire scenery of the book to that end of our existing dispensation, which we describe, or symbolize, as the general Resurrection? I can only suggest in extenuation of this difficulty, that Ezekiel (xxxvii. 3-14) had already under the parable of the "*dry bones* reviving" described the restoration of Israel from Babylon; and Isaiah (xxvi. 9) had expressed triumph over Moab under the same emphatical figure, *Thy dead men shall live*. Whether, then, it were the fervour of poetry, grasping all things in earth and heaven, or whether the "unsearchable groaning" of our better nature, not consenting to mortality (Romans viii. 22-26), made its foreboding felt by lavishing on national restoration the imagery of something higher, there seems even in earlier Prophets, and may well have been in Daniel, the last, a habit of anticipating the Last Things by adapting phraseology borrowed from them to the revolutionary or dynastic events of a nearer time. Something of the same kind must, to an ill-defined extent, be admitted of the language, human in its simplicity, divine in its grandeur, in which the Gospels describe the Fall of Jerusalem (Matt. xxiv. 34; Mark xiii. 30), for to no other event, before that generation passed away, can their language be applied. No view, however, would seem to myself more fundamentally unsatisfactory, than that which, in the manner of Schleiermacher, and of some, apparently, in this country, regards the horizon of the Apostles as altogether temporal, and limits the kingdom of God to a renovation of Earth. Not to dwell on the improbability (which may be more a feeling than an argument), that Christ's promises should fall below the aspirations of gifted servants of God in Gentile lands, his own language seems a sufficient proof, that He neither misunderstood the Prophets spiritually, nor acquiesced in their temporal applications, but inverted them in a direction of which their authors had little idea, and transformed them not only by the creation of a new centre, but by the infusion of a wisdom beyond their own; on the same principle as, when He

spoke of Moses in the bush, He won out of the association of the patriarchs with Jehovah an assurance of the eternity of Man's destiny. It is useless to argue this, the only mode consistent with a reasonable respect for Scripture, in which the vast majority of the New Testament applications of prophecy can be justified, so long as the shorter and readier mode, of which Dr. Pusey's Lectures contain so many curious examples, continues in vogue. Enough in this place has been said to limit the effect upon our interpretation of Daniel, which need arise from its mention of a resurrection. A satisfactory proof, that a Judaic kingdom, as of the Asmonean princes, however magnified in presentiment, was more intended by the writer than such a spiritual and eternal kingdom as God set up by Christ in the hearts of faithful men, may be found in chapter ii. 44, "*the kingdom shall not be left to other people.*" This is the stumbling-block of national Messianism, which Christ destroyed by inverting it, and by disappointing the expectation of which He in part, if not principally, shocked the feelings of his nation (Luke iv. 28 ; Luke iii. 8 ; Acts xxii. 22).

Upon the whole, the book falls so naturally into its Maccabaic date, that the thoughtful reader might well ask, on which side is there most danger of fighting against God? Must it not be on that which, apart from coercion built upon misrepresentation, stands self-convicted of helplessness?

9. It is by no means an absolute necessity that the more marvellous narratives in Daniel should lose their historical character from the placement of the book in a later age. They may be accepted, as traditions historically handed down; or they may retain credence and authority from the character of Inspiration, with which the book recording them is invested. There seems no logical inconsistency in the position of one who, otherwise persuaded of the Divine authority of Scripture, continues, upon its authority, or from religious associations, to receive narratives for which he cannot secure independently an impregnable basis. In such a case, the miracles will not be the

support of the religious feeling, but the burden borne by it. Probably those of my readers, who are accustomed to analyse their thoughts, will often have found, that convictions which they might have been inclined to regard as primary, are in reality dependent upon association with something simpler. Such seems eminently the case with the miraculous narratives of the Old Testament ; at least with such of them as, being removed beyond easy means of verification, we believe actively or passively from their associations with religion. Although it has been said, that "it is certain, that no one ever believed in a miracle for the sake of a moral lesson," I suspect that our habitual assent to the fitness of the Ten Commandments disposes us to receive whatever may be the scriptural account of the Passage of the Red Sea ; and that the Decalogue is in the dialectics of conscience more fundamental than the Exodus. So in other actions, more nearly attested, which the hope or affection of generations has embraced too fondly to let them willingly be questioned, we should certainly judge the testimony with a different eye, if it exalted wicked persons, or exemplified cruelty, or bade us practise crime, or tended to despair. Thus Faith in the true supernatural everywhere gives to phenomenal Miracle more than she receives from it. However little this principle may be apprehended by those who prefer making phenomena the foundation of faith (either because the bodily senses seem to them better guides than the mental perceptions, or because they are conscious of straining doctrine into so exaggerated a form that it no longer carries its witness to the heart), they seldom in practice fail to give involuntary sign of its truth. Their method, when they are asked for proof, is not to strengthen the "evidence" (which in consistency it should be), but to enlarge on professional obligation, which is a form, and the coarsest form, of resolving the question into religious associations. A similar testimony is implied in the circumstance, that an ardent defender of traditional views of Prophecy could find no better proof of the gift of prediction, than that the authors claimed—therefore

must not be doubted to have possessed it. Prediction ¹ here, as Miracle elsewhere, had moral or personal sympathy as its ground of acceptance. The indignant language used at the possibility of Daniel's intention being deceptive, though it proceeds on a misconception, appeals fundamentally to the same principle. The intention of these remarks is to point out, that whenever miracles are believed on other ground than that of unbiassed assent to testimony, they are no longer evidences, and cannot be foundations of faith ; although they may stand on their own basis, if the evidence be adequate ; or may be accepted, through the force of religious associations, as inseparably connected with a faith otherwise established. Thus parts of the Book of Daniel, which judged by "a remorseless criticism" might be thought to resemble the Deutero-Canonical narratives with which the Greek Version associates them, may still be regarded as sacred history by any one persuaded, not of the inspiration, but of the dictation of the Bible, in so strong a sense as to make the Divine veracity responsible for all the contents of the volume.

Still it may be a true, though undesired, presentiment, that portions of the book will have their acceptance modified in the judgment of many by a recognition of its Maccabaic origin. Especially such may be the case with those who consider Miracle the criterion of Revelation. Their case being that, antecedently to miracle, we have no knowledge of the supernatural, they are bound to approach the enquiry without the prepossessions of others by whom the supernatural is on truer grounds honoured. They cannot, after systematic disparagement of the faculties which apprehend moral and spiritual goodness, refuse to fortify by facts that position of sensuous phenomenon as the basis of dialectics, which they deliberately chose as the best antidote to speculation, and as a substitute for the reverence and aspiration which ground the faith of conscience and of reason. They need not magnify the romantic element in the manner of

¹ *Aids*, etc., p. 95.

Hitzig and Von Lengerke. If they conduct their enquiry on the principle, which Sir G. C. Lewis, with a steadiness typical of the Anglo-British mind, exemplified, of postulating evidence contemporaneous with events, especially with strange events, an interval of nearly four centuries (that normally fatal period for the fullest development of story), gives room for imagination, as well as brings the book into contact with influences unfavourable to precise chronicle. So little has the book the framework of chronicle, that it presents four kings in succession, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus, whom no discoverable history arranges in that order, even if Belshazzar be sufficiently discovered for hypothesis, and if Darius the Mede have his existence gratuitously conceded. The historical critic in such a region will not be induced by the great desirableness of miracles to except them from the doubtfulness with which he regards the political picture . . .

10. The most serious apprehensions, arising out of a natural interpretation of Daniel, hardly turn upon the mere effect as regards the marvellous stories, whose chief importance arises from their bearing upon theories of inspiration. It is impossible not to foresee some effect upon the entire theory of prophecy; and this is not a mere adjunct, but a thing which affects the framework and kernel of the New Testament. We need not disturb ourselves much about the Seventy Weeks, which on any theory were too disputable to have much "evidential" value. We might spare a certain amount of prediction of secular events in ancient times, not perhaps without damage to preconceptions, but with signal benefit to our interpretation of a large part of the Old Testament. It is not only a possibility, but, whenever discussion ceases to be suspended or prejudiced by extraneous influences, it will be a necessity, that we should resign cheerfully, like mariners throwing infected goods overboard with their own hands, all those "*directly* Messianic" interpretations, in which, without the intervention of any earlier person, or without broader suggestion of spiritual principle, Jesus of Nazareth is held to

be distinctly, personally, foreseen as the Christ. So much will come of itself, from the perusal of the Old Testament, translated by its context, without regard to tradition. If, as most critics think, the appearances of prediction in Daniel are, from their minute developments and dramatic phantasmagoria, unlike the bulk of Old Testament prophecies, it need not alarm us that such unique features have an unique lateness of origin, not devised as their explanation, but pre-existent as their cause. The far more serious ground of alarm is that, if the horizon of Daniel's Messianic kingdom was merely Maccabaic or temporal, it suggests a similar construction for kindred passages in the Gospels, and raises the question how far the horizon of these latter was eternal. Considering the vast number of features in the Gospels and the Apocalypse, which seem to identify Christ's Second Coming with the Fall of Jerusalem, and to shut up the completion of the promises within the range of a renovation of society, or the establishment of better sentiments and reformed institutions in the world, have we any longer a Gospel to preach, not merely of "the coming age," but of life eternal? Does the whole story resolve itself into the Idea bursting its mould, and developing a new one; the thought of God fulfilling itself in many ways? I can neither think such questions trivial, nor follow those who resolve them in a merely temporal sense.

Before any one hastily concludes, that such a result arises from our natural interpretation of Daniel, let him consider well the language of Christ and the Apostles, on these several subjects: on the nature of his kingdom; on his relation to the Old Testament; on the warfare of his disciples; on whether they should fear what comes before death, or what follows death; and whether the rest remaining for them should be at Jerusalem, under David's throne; or meeting the Lord in the air, in some one of many mansions, not seen and temporal, but unseen and eternal.

"*My kingdom,*"¹ says Christ, "*is not of this world.*" "*The kingdom of God is within you.*" *Sin* reigned, says St. Paul, till Christ came, but henceforward *grace* reigns. Such things were "*said of old time,*" says Christ thrice on the mount, blaming the Old Testament, "*but I say unto you,*" He proceeds, other things. There had been a temple made with hands; Christ promises one made without hands. St. Paul had been a servant of *the Old Testament in the letter which killed*; but became a preacher of *the New, in the Spirit which quickens*. He too had known temples and rites wrought with hands, but thought them merely instrumental. Again, Christ's disciples were not to return evil for evil, yet to fight the good fight; their enemies were *not flesh and blood, the weapons of their warfare not to be carnal*; they were *not to fear what could kill the body, but what could hurt the soul: not the flame that is quenched, but the undying worm*; nor was the rest remaining for them to be amongst walls already to a prescient eye crumbling in destruction; but *where Christ was, they were to be*; in the glory which He had from his Father, in a realm where spirits made perfect know, as they have long ago been known.

The conclusion upon the whole (the details of which may be found elsewhere) is that, although the New Testament must not be called contrary to the Old (as the bright side of a cloud is not contrary to the dark) there is sufficient difference in the nature, genius, and horizon of each, for us to read the Prophets and the Book of Daniel in their natural and undistorted sense, yet believe that, in the fulness of the times Christ *threw light on life and immortality*. The view here suggested is not essentially different from that of the earliest Fathers of the Church, or from that of Milton in the *Paradise*

¹ "Seek God alone, who is the true kingdom for which we and all men daily pray when we say the Lord's prayer." . . . "Therefore, children, seek first the kingdom of God, which is God himself, and nought else."—*Tauler's Sermon* xxiv., for the *Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity*.

One of the most beautiful collects in our older Liturgy had, "*Cui servire regnare est.*"

Regained ;¹ though it makes larger provision for the natural interpretation of the Old Testament, than Justin Martyr's criticism rendered possible, or Milton's design required.

Should it be thought that Mr. Desprez's² researches in this volume, or elsewhere, tend too exclusively in the direction which has been deprecated, it may be suggested that whatever scope for variety of feeling is afforded by spiritual adaptations, their indispensable preliminary in all cases must be a frank acknowledgment of the natural sense of the document. Whatever tends to bring about such acknowledgment, is in the first instance a good, whatever may be afterwards built upon it. One of the features most painful and injurious to the Church in Dr. Pusey's recent Lectures, is that, in entire consistency with his career, he labours to throw back interpretation, and fix upon the Bible the seven seals of tradition which had hardly for Englishmen been taken off it ; hence whatever possibility might be of winning a right of adaptation, or of recasting temporal images into a spiritual mould, is postponed or thrown away, while traditional glosses upon the text are repeated, by one who says he has considered these things for forty years.

I should have ended, if a subtle, possibly a devout partisan had not invited readers of the Book of Daniel to examine it in the light of the last judgment of God. That issue pleases me better than the *poco curante* tone. Truth is not changed,

¹ But to guide nations in the way of truth
By saving doctrine, and from error lead
To know, and knowing worship God aright,
Is yet more kingly ; this attracts the soul,
Governs the inner man, the nobler part ;
That other o'er the body only reigns.

—*P. R.*, ii. 473.

Compare, less directly, De David quoque licet multi de Domino nostro æstiment prophetatum (quod nos etiam non negamus), Spir. Sanct. *in typo venturi canit*. Hier. in Gal. v. Jerome is exceedingly inconsistent, and may suggest what he blames elsewhere.

² My perusal not having yet extended to the later chapters of the volume, I can only refer to them from some intimation of their purport.

because we live in a mincing age. Whatever may be symbolical in picturings of the Last Account, or whatever questions may suggest themselves, how far the Judge of the whole earth scatters by mysterious steps the retributions which inspired imagination assembles into a day of doom, that is the light—(pointing to sober investigation of realities, instead of to conjectural estimates from name, or station, or numbers), in which questions should be examined, affecting fundamentally the faith of Christendom. We may understand strange propositions hereafter. The practical comfort of an appeal made with such solemnity should be to convey assurance to men who believe there is anything serious in religion, that the Book of Daniel involves questions which neither laity nor clergy can rightly disregard. If religious duty, prudence, liberal curiosity, should awaken a larger circle to study a subject, on which the Regius Professor's Lectures contain a mass of distorted information, from Bp. Newton and others, his book would have been laudable, at the solitary serious attempt on the traditional side to place the question in an argumentative phase ; interesting, as a collection of materials which less prepossessed minds will employ differently ; and also memorable, as the beginning of the end.¹

¹ It cannot be disrespectful to the memory of the author of this Introduction that, for the sake of brevity, portions not directly bearing upon the Book of Daniel, have been omitted.

THE FOUR KINGDOMS.

CHAPTER II.

THE KINGDOM OF GOLD.

"Thou, O king, sawest, and beheld a great image. . . . This image's head was of fine gold. . . . Thou art this head of gold" (ii. 31, 38).

THE KINGDOM OF SILVER.

"His breast and his arms of silver."
 "After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee" (ii. 32, 39).

CHAPTER VII.

THE KINGDOM OF GOLD.

"The first was like a lion and had eagle's wings : I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it" (vii. 4).

THE KINGDOM OF SILVER.

"A second, like to a bear ; and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it" (vii. 5).

CHAPTER II.	CHAPTER VII.	CHAPTER VIII.	CHAPTER XI.
THE KINGDOM OF BRASS.	THE KINGDOM OF BRASS.	THE KINGDOM OF BRASS.	THE KINGDOM OF BRASS.
"His belly and his thighs of brass" (ii. 32).	"A leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl ; the beast had also four heads ; and dominion was given to it" (vii. 6).	"A ram which had two horns . . . and one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last . . . The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia" (viii. 3-20).	"Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia ; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all : and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia" (xi. 2).

THE KINGDOM OF IRON.	THE KINGDOM OF IRON.	THE KINGDOM OF IRON.
"The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron . . . and where-as thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided . . . partly strong and partly broken . . . they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men" (ii. 40-43).	"A fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth : it devoured and break in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it; and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns" (vii. 7).	"Behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power" (viii. 5, 6).
THE FOUR NOTABLE ONES.	THE TEN HORNS.	THE KINGDOM OF IRON.
SELEUCUS NICATOR, PTOLEMY LAGI, LYSIMACHUS, CASSANDER. "The he goat waxed very great; and when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven" (viii. 8). "Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power" (viii. 22). "And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven" (xi. 4).	"His kingdom shall be plucked up even for others besides those." "The king of the south." xi. 5.—Ptolemy Philadelphus. "The king of the north." xi. 6.—Antiochus Deus. "A branch of her (Berenice's) roots." xi. 7.—Ptolemy Euergetes. "The king of the north." xi. 8.—Seleucus Callinicus. "The king of the south." xi. 9.—Ptolemy Philopator. "The king of the north." xi. 11, 13, 15.—Antiochus Magnus. "The king of the south." xi. 14.—Ptolemy Epiphanes. "The raiser of taxes." xi. 20.—Seleucus Philopator. "The prince of the covenant." xi. 22.—Demetrius. "The overflow." xi. 22.—Heliiodorus, or, xi. 25-40.—Ptolemy Philometor. "The vile person." xi. 21.—ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES.	"A mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven, and not to his posterity . . . his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those" (xi. 3, 4).

ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES.

CHAPTER VII.

"Behold, there came up among them (the ten horns) another little horn" (vii. 8).

"A horn that had eyes . . . whose look was more stout than his fellows" (vii. 20).

"And he shall speak great words against the Most High" (vii. 25).

"Before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots . . . before whom three fell . . . he shall subdue three kings" (vii. 8, 20, 24).

"I beheld the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them" (vii. 21).

"He shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws" (vii. 25).

"They shall be given into his hand until a time, and times, and the dividing of time" (vii. 25).

"I beheld till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame" (vii. 11).

"The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end" (vii. 26).

CHAPTER VIII., IX.

"Out of one of them (the four notable ones) came forth a little horn" (viii. 9).

"A king of fierce countenance and understanding dark sentences" (viii. 23).

"He also shall stand up against the Prince of princes" (viii. 25).

"It cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground and stamped upon them" (viii. 10).

"He shall destroy wonderfully . . . and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people" (viii. 24).

"By him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down" (viii. 11).

"In the midst (half) of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" (ix. 27).

"He shall be broken without (in want of) hand" (viii. 15).

"Messiah shall be cut off and there is not (a helper) to him" (ix. 26).

CHAPTERS XI., XII.

"In his estate (Seleucus Philopator) shall arise a vile person" (Antiochus Epiphanes) (xi. 21).

"He shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his father's fathers" (xi. 24).

"He shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods" (xi. 36).

"He shall obtain the kingdom (of Seleucus Philopator) by flatteries . . . The arms of the overflower (Heliodorus) shall be overflowed before him . . . Yea also the prince of the covenant (Demetrius)" (xi. 21, 22).

"His heart shall be against the holy covenant . . . and he shall have indignation against the holy covenant" (xi. 28, 30).

"They shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice" (xi. 31).

"It shall be for a time, times, and an half" (xii. 7).

"That determined shall be poured on the desolator" (ix. 27 ; xi. 36).

"He shall come to his end and none shall help him" (xi. 36).

KINGDOM OF THE SAINTS TO BE SET UP BY THE GOD OF HEAVEN.

CHAPTER II.

“Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image . . . and the stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth . . . And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed : and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever” (ii. 34-44).

CHAPTER VII.

“I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him : and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (vii. 13, 14, 27).

CHAPTER XII.

“And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people ; and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time ; and at that time shall thy people be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book : and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt ! and they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever” (xii. 1-3).

DANIEL:

OR THE

Apocalypse of the Old Testament.

CHAPTER I.

DATE AND AUTHORSHIP OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

IN the attempt to elucidate so obscure a theme as the Book of Daniel, which has been and continues to be a fruitful source of theological controversy, we are aware that we are entering upon a task of no common difficulty. The Apocalypse of the Old Testament, as it is not unfrequently called, shares the mysteriousness of that of the New. "Calvin was wise (says Scaliger) because he did not write on the Apocalypse"; and perhaps it is no proof of wisdom to venture upon a subject in the interpretation of which, as before the walls of an impregnable fortress, the energies of the best and bravest have been expended to little purpose. We are reminded then at the outset, by the nature of the work before us, to exercise caution and sobriety; to keep imagination, which is apt to run wild on prophetic subjects, within due bounds; and to abide by the rules of sound and careful criticism.

Whether the writer of the book which bears the name of Daniel described a fictitious or a real person, is a point not removed from the possibility of doubt. In behalf of the first of these positions, it has been argued that the Daniel mentioned by Ezekiel appears to have been older than the Daniel of the Babylonian Captivity and that the prophet

referred to some celebrated man of antiquity rather than to his own contemporary.

The passage in which the first mention is made of Daniel occurs in Ezekiel xiv., in which he is classed intermediately with the ancient patriarchs Noah and Job, and it has been conjectured that he would not have occupied that position if he had not already acquired an historical reputation. This supposition receives confirmation from the circumstance that the vision of chapter x. is seen on the Hiddekel, or Tigris, at Nineveh; "for if the scene had been Babylon under Darius, the river must have been the Euphrates."

His consummate wisdom is moreover alluded to as a matter of public notoriety by the same prophet, in an ironical contrast drawn between the boastings of the prince of Tyre and the superlative wisdom of Daniel, "Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel, and there is no secret that they can hide from thee" (Ezek. xxviii. 3); and this reputation for extraordinary wisdom seems to require a longer period for its development than the eighteen years which elapsed between the third year of Jehoiakim, B.C. 606, when Daniel and his three companions were carried as children to Babylon, and the eleventh year of Jehoiachin's captivity, B.C. 588, when the word of the Lord by Ezekiel came to the prince of Tyre.

On the other hand it is argued that the author of this book deals with a real and not with a fictitious Daniel, not only because the use of the Chaldee tongue in parts of the book fits in with the notion of an actual residence of the prophet at Babylon, but because the particulars of his career are in keeping with the circumstances in which he is said to have been placed. The scenes depicted in the first six chapters agree with what is known from other sources of Babylonian and Persian modes of life. The Magi, with their astronomical calculations and interpretations of dreams, correspond with what is elsewhere said of "the wise men of the East," and "the Babylonian numbers." The enforced worship of the golden image of Nebuchadnezzar, and of

Darius himself, finds a parallel in contemporaneous acts of regal deification. The grotesque combinations of human and bestial figures evince a conception familiar to the Assyrian and Babylonian periods; and the modes of capital punishment, by means of a burning fiery furnace and a den of lions, do not seem at variance with the cruel practice of the monarchs of Babylonia and Persia. Moreover, the historical form of the book makes it imperative that the principal personage should have a real and not an imaginary existence; and it is difficult to conceive, on the supposition that the events recorded are without foundation, how it could have gained its position amongst the Hagiographa, with a people scrupulously careful with regard to their sacred writings. We may add to this, that our Lord Himself is thought to refer to the Book of Daniel with which, in common with the Jews of that period, He was doubtless well acquainted, and applies the statement respecting "the abomination of desolation" of the days of Antiochus Epiphanes to corresponding impieties about to happen at Jerusalem. With similar recognition of its canonical authority, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews includes those who "through faith stopped the mouths of lions, and quenched the violence of fire" (alluding probably to scenes described in the book) amongst the martyrs "of whom the world was not worthy." The author¹ of the First Book of the Maccabees declares that "Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, by believing were saved out of the flames, and that Daniel for his innocency was de-

¹ The mention made by Mattathias, in his dying address to his sons, of the "innocency" of Daniel, and the "belief" of his three companions, may have been derived either from the Book of Daniel itself, or from legends of the captivity common to both. The former of these theories would seem most probable, as the Book of Daniel appears to have exercised a powerful influence, very perceptible in the Greek, upon the writer of 1 Maccabees (comp. 1 Macc. ii. 49 with Dan. xi. 36, xii. 1; 1 Macc. i. 46-54 with Dan. xi. 31; 1 Macc. iv. 43 with Dan. viii. 14; 1 Macc. vi. 2 with Dan. viii. 21); the date of the composition of 1 Maccabees, B.C. 110-100 affording sufficient space for the precedence of the Book of Daniel.

livered out of the mouths of the lions" (1 Macc. ii. 59-60). Josephus makes no question respecting the individuality and personal history of Daniel. He recapitulates the principal events of Daniel's life, and declares that "he was favoured with many wonderful revelations, and those as to one of the greatest of the prophets" (Ant. x. 11).

But the question in dispute concerning a fictitious or a real Daniel does not involve any conclusion as to the authorship and age of the book in which, for the most part, his history is recorded. Evidence of a powerful, and, as we think, unanswerable kind, points to a later period than that of the Babylonian Captivity as the time of authorship, and brings down the date of the book in its present state to an age subsequent to the events therein described. This, while it does not invalidate the general history, is likely to have some influence upon the way in which its particulars may be interpreted. It transforms the book from a declaration by anticipation of things yet future into an historical relation of past occurrences. It excludes the predictive element altogether. It assigns limits for its interpretation, beyond which criticism dares not pass, and demands that its meaning shall be sought in the past, and not in the future. As a preliminary, then, of the utmost importance towards a correct interpretation, it will be necessary to state the arguments on which we build the theory of a late authorship for the Book of Daniel. If these shall be found trustworthy, we may reject schemes of interpretation which have repeatedly been found fallacious, for those pointed out by criticism and the necessities of the case. And in so doing we shall be guilty neither of rashness nor of want of a due regard to the Sacred Record. "To suppose that we can serve God's cause by shutting our eyes to the light; much more to suppose that we can serve it by asserting that we see what we do not see, *because we wish to see it*, is simply intellectual atheism."

Signs of a later authorship than the period of Daniel's residence in Babylon are perceptible in the book itself. To these

we shall presently advert. But before we adduce the internal evidence of a later date which the book affords, it will be necessary to call attention to the practice which prevailed, amongst apocalyptic writers especially, of prefixing an assumed name, and assigning an assumed era, to their compositions. In ancient times authorship under false colours was adopted without any sense of moral or literary dishonesty. The end, in the opinion of pious men of old, justified the means, or, rather, the means themselves appeared unobjectionable, having the nature of a rhetorical imitation, rather than a deception. To condemn, therefore, with too great severity a practice which sinned against no received code, or to apply to writers of a past age the rules which govern modern¹ literature, would be idle and irrelevant. The question must be judged, not by existing habits and modes of thought, but by those of a time when such imitations were held as legitimate as our academic exercises. The Second Book of Esdras is a remarkable instance of the extent to which an edifying purpose was held to excuse the assumption of an unreal name and period of composition. This book, written probably thirty years after the destruction of Jerusalem and abounding with quotations from the Gospels and the

¹ "You know nothing was anciently more common, or held more innocent, than such personations of authors. And if this in succeeding ages came to be the occasion of some mistakes, especially among the vulgar and less critical readers, it is not much to be wondered at; but it is not then to be imputed as a crime to them who had no thoughts of deceiving any by it, or (which is all one) of whom it doth not appear that they had. Some of the first pieces of antiquity have been written in this character; the ancient academy were particularly famous for it. We do not think the worse of Plato for his personating of Socrates, or of Cicero for his personating of Cato. And though the names of Plato and Cicero should have been swept away with the torrent of time, yet not only the Book of Wisdom, but that of Job also, is supposed by some learned men to be of this kind without derogating from the authority of one, or the excellence of both. . . . The golden verses, which we read under the name of Pythagoras, will not cease to be esteemed by the ablest judges, though not written till many hundred years after the death of that philosopher whose name they bear."—*Apoleipomena*: DR. FRANCIS LEE.

Apocalypse, is assigned by its author to the anachronous period of the Babylonian Captivity, and is introduced under the assumed name and genealogy of Ezra. The Book of Enoch, quoted as it is by apostolical men, has an equally doubtful parentage, unless, indeed, any should be bold enough to refer its authorship to an antediluvian period. The same may be said of the books of Wisdom and Ecclesiastes, ascribed, indeed, by their authors to the son of David, who was king over Israel in Jerusalem, but bearing evident marks of a date subsequent to that of the Captivity. There are eminent living critics who would adduce what they term the later Isaiah, (written, as they conceive, by a different author from the composer of the first thirty-nine chapters, and occupied solely with a "sustained tone of exultation for the glad tidings of the return,") or the Book of Deuteronomy, (possibly a compilation of the age which listened to the plaintive tones of Jeremiah,) as instances of the custom prevalent in former times of conveying religious instruction under the covering and authority of assumed names.

Under the new dispensation, the same practice may to some extent be also traced. Apostolical authority declares that "many had taken in hand to set forth a declaration of those things which were most surely believed." "The very titles given to our Gospels—the Gospel *according* to Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, do not imply that the Gospels were written from one end to the other by the persons whose name they bear, but that they contain the traditions arising from each of these disciples, and cover themselves with their authority." Various degrees of acceptance with regard to authorship speedily attached themselves to the Second Epistle of Peter, the Epistle of Jude, and the Apocalypse, whilst false Gospels ascribed to Peter, Paul, or false Apocalypses ascribed to Thomas, Stephen, and Elias, abounded. In a word, it seems to have been desired, at a time when oral tradition slowly made way for written records, to clothe such records with every possible circumstance of authority; and it appears to

have been a common practice, and one tacitly allowed, to employ great names as an authoritative recommendation.

In distinguishing, then, between the prophet Daniel and the book which bears his name, and in placing its authorship at a considerable interval from the lifetime of the individual to whom it is usually assigned, no violence is offered to the good faith of the composer, or to the literary habits of Jewish writers. Like that of Ezra, or of any other illustrious master in Israel, the name of the prophet may have been used with the view of giving colour and importance to the history. And in employing for this purpose the name and authority of Daniel, the writer sanctioned a literary artifice rather than a breach of moral principle. He availed himself of a practice common at the time, with the desire of impressing his countrymen more deeply by the use of a name and an authority qualified to command respect. It need not, then, create surprise to find that the Book of Daniel has been dealt with in a way similar to that attending the composition of other Hebrew writings; and it should rather be a matter of congratulation that a solution for so difficult a question as the date of this book, whose late authorship is required by the necessities of the case, can easily be found.

In endeavouring to establish for the Book of Daniel a date later by more than four centuries than that usually assigned to it; and in attempting to show that, however it may incorporate fragments of more ancient history, in its present form it is not earlier than the age of Antiochus Epiphanes; it will be necessary to enter into the consideration of the following points of inquiry :—

- I. *The diversity of language in which the book is written.*
- II. *The place occupied by the book in the Hebrew canon.*
- III. *The use of Greek and Persian words.*
- IV. *The style of the book differing from the writings of the Captivity.*
- V. *The historical character of the book extending to, but not beyond, the age of Antiochus Epiphanes.*

VI. *The marvellous narrations and historical inaccuracies which have aroused suspicion from the earliest times.*

I. *The diversity of language in which the book is written.*

The language employed from chapter i. 1 to verse 4 of chapter ii. is Hebrew ; that used from verse 4 of chapter ii. to the end of chapter vi. is Chaldee ;¹ the remaining five chapters reverting to the original tongue. As a probable reason for this diversity it has been conjectured that the writer incorporated into his book fragments of more ancient history, just as Ezra, who wrote in Hebrew, inserted into his narrative the letters of Rehum and his companions to Artaxerxes (Ezra iv.), and of Tatnai to Darius (Ezra v.), and the replies of these monarchs to their respective correspondents (Ezra iv., vi., vii.), all of which are written in Chaldee. A second, although less likely, reason for this diversity may be traced to the desire of the author to clothe the book which he put forth under the name and authority of Daniel with a style suitable to the peculiar situation of that ancient prophet, who might be expected sometimes to employ Hebrew as his native tongue, and sometimes Chaldee (especially in delineating subjects connected with the affairs of Babylonia), as the language which he had been taught at the court of Babylon. And this

¹ The transition from Hebrew to Chaldee, where the wise men reply to the king "in Syriack," is as natural as that the letters to and from the Persian monarchs (Ezra iv., v.) should be written in Chaldee, the introduction of Babylonian topics into the subject demanding the use of a different dialect. A similar case is found (Jer. x. 11) in which the captive Jews are bid to say in the Chaldee tongue to their Babylonian conquerors, "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens"; a proverbial expression repeated with slight variation in the Epistle of Jeremy, and forming the burden of that song against idolatry. The clothing, therefore, of these ancient recollections of Chaldea in their native tongue would seem to be only in accordance with previous usage ; and added to this it may be remembered that the Chaldee dialect, from the time of the Captivity, was even more familiar to the Jews than their own language. It is more difficult to account for the continuation of its employment in chap. vii., unless for the purpose of connecting the vision of the Great Image with the corresponding one of the Four Great Beasts.

might the more easily have been the case inasmuch as the two languages continued in use long after the Captivity: the Hebrew being employed, especially by the learned—many of the post-exile books, as Chronicles, Ecclesiastes, being written in that tongue, whilst the language of intercourse was Chaldee. This admixture of languages, although perhaps insufficient to warrant the conclusion that the Book of Daniel is the production of various authors (a remarkable uniformity of style and design pervading the whole work), may permit us to infer that it is a compilation rather than an independent original treatise, in which older documents have been mixed up with newer additions. The Song of the Three Children introduced in the LXX at chap. iii. 23; the History of Susannah, and the Destruction of Bel and the Dragon, entitled in the LXX “Part of the prophecy of Habakkuk” (not to be found in the Hebrew, and cut off from the end of Daniel), show that the book has been so far tampered with as to become a repository of pieces collected from divers quarters, and that liberties at variance with the profound respect with which the Jews regarded their other sacred books have been taken with it. In the version of the LXX in which is found the story of Susannah and the elders, there is a play¹ upon the names of the trees under which Susannah is said to have been discovered. This *jeu de mots*, natural enough if the Greek be the original, cannot be rendered in another language without changing the trees or the sense. The Greek²

¹ “Ἀπὸ τοῦ σχίνου σχίναι, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πρίνου πρίσαι.”

² The LXX Daniel has the character of a commentary rather than a translation, inserting into the text passages of great length which are not found in the Hebrew, and omitting others. It is exceedingly valuable as the earliest exposition of Daniel, made probably at no great length of time from the date of our present book. “The ships of Chittim” (xi. 30) are paraphrased of the “Romans (under Popilius) who shall come and expel him (Antiochus), and shall rebuke him strongly.” The seventy weeks (LXX, years) are expanded into seven, and seventy, and sixty-two—one hundred and thirty-nine weeks (years)—in order to bring down the prophecy to the one hundred and thirty-ninth year of the Seleucidæ, being the second of that of Antiochus Epiphanes. “Messiah cut off” is inter-

of the LXX moreover differs so completely from the Hebrew and the Chaldee, not only in particular words and phrases, but in the insertion or omission of whole narratives, as to render it impossible for that version to have been made from the one now in our possession ; thereby leaving room for the supposition either that the translator had access to other annals than those incorporated into our book, or that those which we now have existed under a different form.

“The Book of Daniel” (says Sir Isaac Newton, perhaps not the most reliable authority on prophetic subjects) “is a collection of papers written at several times : the six last chapters contain prophecies written by Daniel himself ; the first six are a collection of historical papers written by others. The fourth chapter is a decree of Nebuchadnezzar. The first chapter was written after Daniel’s death, for the author saith that Daniel continued to the first year of Cyrus ; that is, his first year over the Persians and Medes, and third year over Babylon. And for the same reason, the fifth and sixth chapters were also written after his death ; for they end with the words, ‘so this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.’” A multiplicity of literary materials is here admitted, and to this cause we would assign the diversity of language as well as the legendary form of portions of the Book of Daniel. Having probably a real

preted of the unction extinguished, probably by the murder of Onias ; and the consummation ends *not with the destruction of the city and the sanctuary*, but with “the command that an answer shall be made to Daniel’s prayer, and that Jerusalem shall be built a city to the Lord.” The LXX version appears to have been rejected by the church, and replaced by that of Theodotion ; the cause of this rejection being possibly the liberty taken with the Hebrew text, combined with the omission of all reference to the Messiah. The exposition, however, is not the less valuable for its condemnation by some of the ancient fathers. On the contrary, it affords a proof that the earliest commentary on Daniel anticipated the results of modern criticism, and that its visions were interpreted of events connected with Antiochus at a period when the symbolic imagery in which they were clothed was more likely to be understood than in more recent times.

basis in events which took place during the eventful sojourn of the Jews in Babylon, it presents an epitome of traditions which flowed down from that early period arranged in prophetic garb ; and the probable position to be assigned to it is that of a "*rifacimento* or modernized edition, or remodelled expansion of old fragmentary remains," rather than an independent and original history. To this it may be added that from chap. i. to the end of chap. vi. the subject is carried on in the third person, giving the appearance of being the reproduction of more ancient writings, possibly extracts from the Chaldee annals. With the commencement of chap. vii. to the end of chap. xii., Daniel is himself the speaker, and the remarkable expression, "I Daniel," recurs with dramatic reiteration. To the objection that the Hebrew, in which the prophetic part of the book is for the most part written, was unintelligible to the men of the Maccabean age, it may be answered that Hebrew was the language of prophecy generally, and that its use had not gone out at the time in question ; the first part of the Book of Baruch, possibly the Book of Enoch, and, according to Jerome, the First of Maccabees, having been written in that tongue.

II. *The place occupied by the book in the Hebrew canon.*

It is remarkable that the Book of Daniel does not occupy the same position in the Hebrew canon as in our own. There it appears as if withdrawn from the place which it occupies with us as the fourth of the greater prophets, and is classed with those writings called Hagiographa,¹ which were not considered of equal prophetic authority with the other Scriptures. The question to be decided by evidence is, did the

¹ " Illud admoneo, non haberi Daniele apud Hebræos inter prophetas sed inter eos qui ἀγὺγραφα conscripserunt."—HIERON.

" Unanimi consensu retulit gens nostra librum Danielis inter libros hagiographos, non vero inter prophetas."—MAIMONIDES.

In the apocryphal book called the Ascension of Isaiah, probably the composition of a Christian Jew, Daniel is classed with righteous Joseph, and placed after the twelve minor prophets : " In the writings of Amos, my father, of the prophet Hosea, of Micah, of Joel, of Nahum, of Jonah,

Jews withdraw the book from a place which it once occupied in the prophetic roll, or did the Christians elevate it from its original position in the Hagiographa, and install it in a place to which it had no proper title? Ought Malachi or Daniel to stand as the latest book in the English Old Testament? Certainly the omission of the name of the prophet Daniel from the catalogue of Jesus, the son of Sirach, in which occur the names of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, together with the mention of the twelve minor prophets, shows that either the book was unknown¹ to the author of Ecclesiasticus, or was not recognized by him as of like prophetic authority with the rest. It is difficult to account for the neglect by this

of Obadiah, of Habakkuk, of Haggai, of Sephaniah, of Zechariah, and of Malachi; and in the writings of righteous Joseph, and of Daniel.”—*Ascens. Isaia*, iv. 22.

The Talmud mentions that “Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, had this above him (Daniel); that they were prophets, and he was not a prophet; explaining their meaning by the words, “that he was not sent to Israel for the office of prophecy.”

¹ It is objected that David, equally with Daniel, is not classed among the prophets by the son of Sirach, and that “what no one imagines to be a disparagement to the patriarch David cannot have been meant as a discredit to Daniel.” This insidious objection is answered by the fact that the writer sets out by saying: “Let us now praise famous men . . . such as did bear rule in their kingdoms, men renowned for their power, giving counsel by their understandings, and declaring prophecies; leaders of the people by their counsels, and by their knowledge of learning meet for the people, wise and eloquent in their instructions” (xliv. 1-4). After having made special and repeated mention of David (xlvi. 2-11; xlix. 4), he passes on to those who “declare prophecies.” But the strange fact remains that neither as a prophet, nor a protector of the people, *nor as one remarkable for learning and wisdom* (in which capacity we might expect to find him) is Daniel mentioned. The writer not only omits him from the prophetic roll, but he gives him no place among “the leaders of the people by their counsels,” although the prophecy of Ezekiel must have made him acquainted with the name and wisdom of Daniel. It is idle to defend the silence of the writer of Ecclesiasticus respecting Daniel on the ground that the latter was the text-book of Pharisaic opinions, and the former the work of a Sadducee who believed neither in angel nor spirit. In this case the son of Sirach would have observed similar silence respecting the Book of Zechariah, which, equally with that of Daniel, treats of the interference of angels in affairs of men.

writer of so extraordinary a book as that of Daniel, whilst the later books of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi are deemed worthy of notice, except on the supposition that the prophecy was of a suspected character. The same thing may be said of the exclusion of the Book of Daniel from the Targum on the prophets ascribed to Jonathan-ben-Uzziel, viz., Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel (Daniel omitted), and the twelve minor prophets. The conjecture that the Book of Daniel was held in the greatest credit amongst the Jews until the time of the Emperor Hadrian, but that then its position in the canon was changed by the later Jews, is one grave enough to require ample evidence, and for which no evidence seems forthcoming. Nor can much weight be assigned to the statement that the book was translated into Greek in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus; the labours of the Jewish transcribers who were sent by Eleazar, the high priest, being confined to the translation of the law (Ant. xii. 2). The assertion of Josephus that the Book of Daniel was shown to Alexander upon the occasion of his visit to Jerusalem, by Jaddua the high priest, is by far the strongest argument in favour of its earlier date; but this assertion is not corroborated by the historians of Alexander, and seems to have had its pardonable origin in a desire to magnify the high priesthood in the eyes of the Gentiles for whom the "courtier-historian" composed his book.

III. *The use of Greek and Persian words.*

Among the musical instruments, thrice mentioned, Dan. iii. 5, 10, 15, are found the Greek words *kaithros*, κίθαρς, harp; *sabb'ka*, σαμβύκη, sackbut; *pesanterin*, ψαλτήριον, psaltery; *symphonia*, συμφωνία, dulcimer, mentioned as the name of a musical instrument by Polybius (Frag. xxxi. 1, 4).

To this it has been objected that the Greeks had at that time considerable intercourse with Asiatic nations, and that musical instruments invented by the Greeks may have been used by the Babylonians; but it must be rejoined, that the employment of words of such doubtful origin is confined

to the Book of Daniel ; no prophet of the age previous or subsequent to the exile introducing Greek, and, as some say, Macedonian words into his book ; or differing so materially in style, composition, and language, from the writers of his accredited time. "Granted," says Bleek, "that it is difficult to determine whether such names came to Greeks and Babylonians from some common source, or even to the Greeks from the Babylonians ; yet there can be no doubt that the writer of this book, whether directly or indirectly, learnt them from the Greeks. For in the first place it is very improbable that the musical instruments of the Greeks were used in the court of Nebuchadnezzar under their Greek names ; and in the second, it is not likely that Daniel, or a Jew of Palestine of that age, would have been so familiar with these Greek names as to have set them down unexplained or unaccompanied by some cognate term." If the introduction of Latin words, such as *census*, *centurio*, *quadrans*, *colonia*, into the Greek of the New Testament, should be thought to furnish indisputable evidence of a date contemporaneous with the development of the Roman power in Judea, it may be as difficult to overthrow or evade the argument drawn from the admixture of Greek words with the Chaldee of Daniel.

The same thing may be said of the recurrence of words of Persian origin, such as *Partemim*, nobles, *Achashdarpenim*, satraps, etc., which betoken a later date for the Book of Daniel than the reign of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon. If, according to Jeremiah, Babylon was not taken by the Medes and Persians until the third generation from Nebuchadnezzar, it is not easy to conceive that Persian words should be current in that city for so long a time prior to that event. In the mouth of Nebuchadnezzar they are simply anachronous, and therefore impossible.

IV. *The style of the book differing from the writings of the Captivity.*

Among the peculiarities in which the Book of Daniel differs from the writings of the exile we may notice especi-

ally its mysterious character—the book being, as it were, the first Apocalypse, serving as a model for all the rest. Frequent and appalling manifestations of supernatural beings, half human, half divine, are substituted for the direct communications which came to the ancient prophets; and tutelary guardians, entrusted with the protection of nations, play a part somewhat similar to that of the heavenly champions who lead the Maccabean princes to victory (2 Macc. *passim*). To this may be added the enigmatical calculations which contrast with the simple, though more vividly poetical, writings of the other prophets. We recognize no problems of this obscure kind in the works of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, or the minor prophets. Periods like those of “a time, times, and a half,” or the “seventy weeks,” which form so conspicuous a feature in this book, give evidence of different literary conceptions from those which actuated Haggai and Ezekiel. We observe, moreover, the recurrence of words and phrases which, although common to the epoch of the Seleucidæ, are for the most part unknown to that of the Captivity. We may instance the apocalyptical sense in which the words “beast” and “week” are employed; the use of the term “arms” in a military sense; and the unique expression “Ancient of days”¹ peculiar to Daniel. The angelology of the book, expanded from that of the time of Zechariah and approach-

¹ The expression “Ancient of days” is found repeatedly in the Book of Enoch (xlvi. 1; xlvii. 3; xlviii. 2; liv. 1; lxx. 12, 15, 16, 18), and the appellation of “Son of man” also occurs continually. An apocalyptical sense is given to the word “week” (xcii.), and the symbolic term “horn” is used in the same sense as that employed by Daniel (lxxxix. 13, 18, 24). Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, and Phanuel (xl. 8, 9) execute offices similar to those of the guardian angels of the prophet, and the “watchers,” or sleepless ones, are “angels who have deserted the lofty sky and their everlasting station (Jude 6), and who have been polluted with women” (Gen. vi. 2). These last are represented as sending Enoch to pray for them, to whom the answer is given: “Go, say to the watchers of heaven who have sent thee to pray for them; You ought to pray for men, and not men for you” (Enoch xii. 5; xv. 1).

ing that of the Book of Enoch, would also seem to indicate a later origin than the period of the exile. "Watchers," or "holy ones," come down from heaven. "The man Gabriel" (an angelic messenger of comfort, nowhere else mentioned in the Old Testament) executes divine commissions; and Michael, "the great prince" (found only in St. Jude and the Apocalypse), stands up for the children of the Jewish people. A further difference is discoverable in the absence of those allusions to the return from Babylon, which were ever on the lips of the prophets of the Captivity. Whilst they are continually telling of the time when "the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion"; whilst they invite even material nature to sympathize with the liberated people, and exclaim in rapturous ecstasy "Break forth into joy, sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem, for the Lord hath comforted his people," the thoughts and feelings of the writer of this book are turned another way. He sees but the dawn of a cleansed sanctuary and a restored temple, the idol altar set up by Antiochus broken down, and the worship of Jehovah taking the place of the impure sacrifices of the heathen. This is *his* return from a worse than Babylonian captivity; the all-engrossing theme which leaves no room for the introduction of any other. Besides this, the Messianic conceptions of the writer of this book differ from those of the "former prophets." To dwell once more in the land from which they had been banished, under the protection of the monarchs of the East for whose welfare they were willing to pray and to offer sacrifice, appears to have been the limit of the desires of those who returned from Babylon; whereas the theocratic dominion conceived by Daniel contemplates the destruction of all opposing powers, and the exaltation of the Jewish people to the highest pitch of grandeur and national advancement. It is also remarkable that no allusion is made to Daniel, or to the book which bears his name (Ezek. xiv., xxviii., excepted), in the later writings of the Old Testament; and it has been well

observed that "had the book been composed by Daniel, and so extant from the time of Cyrus and known among the Jews, one should expect to find use made of it in the prophets after the captivity" (Bleek). Jeremiah's prophecy exercised an influence upon Zechariah (i. 4), and also upon Daniel (ix. 2); but neither Daniel's visions nor his miraculous personal history appear to be alluded to in books written by his supposed contemporaries. It is obvious that the assertion that Zechariah's visions of the "four horns" and the "four chariots" are taken from Daniel may be met by the more probable statement that Daniel's visions of the "four kingdoms" and the "four great beasts" are taken from Zechariah. That the last mentioned theory is the more likely may be inferred from the circumstance that the visions of Daniel occupy a wider historical area than those of Zechariah: the prophecies of the latter being concerned with the mention of heathen invaders "which *have* scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem" previous to the Babylonian Captivity; those of the former embracing the interval from the Captivity to the Syrian desolations, a period not contemplated¹ in the visions of Zechariah. To invert this order, and to assume that the visions of Daniel suggested those of Zechariah, is only to transfer the charge of plagiarism, with no gain to the cause

¹ Zechariah's visions of the "four horns" (Zech. i. 18-21), and of the "four chariots" (Zech. vi. 1), significant perhaps of the invasions of Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, Pharaoh-Necho, and Nebuchadnezzar, after the last of which "the earth sitteth still, and is at rest," because completely subdued (comp. vi. 8), terminate with the restoration effected by the "four carpenters" or smiths, (possibly) Zerubbabel, Joshua, Haggai, and Zechariah (comp. Ezra v. 1, 2), and the anointing of Joshua, the son of Josedech, between whom and Zerubbabel there should be a "counsel of peace." On the other hand the visions of Daniel, starting from the point where those of Zechariah end, give an epitome of heathen rule from the period of the Captivity to the time of Antiochus, terminating with the destruction of the tyrant, and the restoration of the city and sanctuary by Judas Maccabeus; the "four horns" and the "four chariots" of the former being reproduced in the "four (metallic) kingdoms" and the "four great beasts" of the latter.

of inspiration, but with confusion to the order of the Hebrew canon. On the other hand there can be little doubt that the book which passes under the assumed name of Baruch does contain *bonâ fide* imitations of the Book of Daniel. The error which calls Balthasar the son of Nebuchadnezzar is reiterated by the author of this apocryphal book, and the prayer of Daniel is quoted "in whole verses and that in order"; but as there are no certain data whereby to fix the time of its composition, an epoch later than that of the Book of Daniel may be as suitable as any other. It is idle therefore, as some have done, to support the genuineness of one doubtful book by another edited under equally suspicious circumstances, and the attempt savours of desperation and betrays the absence of better kind of proof. On the contrary it may be conceived to be prejudicial to the traditional view, that the Book of Daniel, although not cited in supposed contemporaneous writings, should be referred to in apocryphal books of the Maccabean period, such as the Book of Enoch, the third Jewish Sibyl, and the extraordinary compilation formed on the model of Jeremiah, Daniel, Isaiah, and Nehemiah, entitled the Book of Baruch.

V. *The historical character of the book extending to, but not beyond, the age of Antiochus Epiphanes.*

To a careful reader the Book of Daniel will seem to resolve itself into a grand climax; one idea running like a thread through the later visions to which the preceding history is introductory and supplemental. Even the earlier, and what may be called the historical, portions of this book are but varied repetitions of one leading subject. The religious persecutions of Nebuchadnezzar prefigure those of Antiochus. The golden image set up by the former is conceived as a type of him who would coerce all men to worship the idols of his adoration. The insanity of the Babylonian monarch finds its antitype in the madness of him who was styled *ἐπιμανής*, a madman, as well as *ἐπιφανής*, illustrious; and the carrying away of the holy vessels to Babylon is significant of

the sacrilegious plunder of the sacred treasures by the Syrian tyrant. Even the repentant humility of Nebuchadnezzar for his recovered reason is not without its parallel in the history of him who offered, but too late, to restore the holy vessels, yea, and "to become a Jew himself, and to go through all the world that was inhabited, and declare the power of God" (2 Macc. ix.). And as we cross the boundary which separates the historical from the prophetic portion of this book, the ruling idea stands out with ever increasing clearness. The profanation of the sanctuary by Antiochus, and its cleansing by Judas Maccabeus, coupled with the destruction of the tyrant and the subsequent glories of the favoured people, is the consummation to which every vision points, and beyond which the prophecy does not extend. With the announcement of these and contemporaneous events the book comes to an abrupt close. It is silent respecting the subsequent victories of the Maccabean princes, and the exploits of a splendid line of Asmonean kings. It is indifferent to the aspect of events which are posterior to the reign of the oppressor who compassed the desolation of Jacob, or to the patriotic efforts of those who succeeded "the valiant man that delivered Israel." "The time of the end," so frequently alluded to, is that when the "indignation shall be accomplished and the sanctuary cleansed" (xi. 36; viii. 14); and in reply to the inquiry in the closing chapter, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" the answer is given, "When he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished" (xii. 6, 7). The significance of this internal evidence appeared so striking to Porphyry that he concluded the book to be written after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes; and, indeed, a comparison of chap. xi. with other prophetic writings will leave little doubt on the mind of an unprejudiced person that he is dealing, not with a predictive declaration of future events, but with history in a prophetic garb. The announcement of the three kings of Persia, who should precede Xerxes; of the "fourth richer

than they all, who should stir up all against the realm of Grecia"; of the mighty king (Alexander), whose kingdom should be divided not to his posterity but to the four winds of heaven; of those kings of the north and south (Syria and Egypt) who preceded or were contemporary with Antiochus; of the rise of the "vile person," Antiochus himself; his treacherous occupation of Judea; his unprincipled invasions of Egypt; his sacrilegious desolations of the sanctuary, and his miserable and inglorious death, may be said to be asserted in this chapter with an attention to particulars which is not characteristic of prophecy generally.

It will also be noticed that events distant from the time usually assigned for the composition of this book, such as the profanations of Antiochus, are described at great length and with astonishing minuteness; whilst those near the supposed times of the writer, as the Babylonian invasion of Judea, are treated with succinctness and brevity. We shall look in vain throughout the rest of the prophetic literature for a similar phenomenon: its usual characteristic is precision and clearness on subjects which approximate to the times of the writers, accompanied with generality and indistinctness with regard to distant events. The converse of this would seem to be the plan adopted by the writer of this book, upon the supposition of his having written in Babylon B.C. 590; for he is diffuse where we should have expected him to be concise, and concise where he might be expected to be diffuse. On that supposition, the copiousness of the later visions is as fatal to a Babylonian, as the meagreness of the earlier is corroborative of a Maccabean authorship; whilst the abrupt termination of the narrative at a specific period confines the subject within the limits we have assigned.

VI. *The marvellous narrations and historical inaccuracies, which have aroused suspicion from the earliest times.*

Amongst these we may mention the dream which faded from the remembrance of Nebuchadnezzar, and of which he demanded not only the interpretation but the purport: a

requisition too exacting even for an Eastern despot, and contrary to the analogy of previous dreams recorded in Holy Scripture. The astounding prodigy recorded of the three children unscathed by the burning fiery furnace, "upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them": possibly an exaggerated account of a real deliverance. The monomania which induced Nebuchadnezzar to eat grass like oxen for *seven*! years; a condition so plainly repugnant to nature, that the early Christians were compelled to admit an allegorical interpretation. The mysterious handwriting upon the wall, interpreted apparently with regard to euphonious agreement with Medes and Persians. The instantaneous destruction of the accusers of Daniel, "their children and their wives," by the lions who had refrained from devouring the prophet, an event not sufficiently prodigious in the opinion of Josephus. These and similar marvellous narratives, however calculated to command respect in a dark age, and to exalt the objects of them above heathen soothsayers and astrologers, acquire for the book in which they are found a legendary rather than a prophetic character, not materially differing from the record of other prodigies of antiquity. To these may be added the edicts of Nebuchadnezzar and Darius (iii. 29; vi. 26), making known to all the princes of their vast empire the veneration to be paid to the one Supreme God,—decrees not only inconsistent with Eastern polytheism, but productive of no result and unsupported by history. An unlimited exertion, moreover, of supernatural power, as well as of abundant angelic interposition, prevails throughout the book. The dreams (iii., iv.) which the Magi cannot interpret are solved by Daniel. The handwriting upon the wall, which they cannot read, is read by the prophet. Daniel is overwhelmed by the greatness of the visions, and is continually restored by angels (vii. 15, 16; viii. 17, 18, 27; x. 8, 9, 16–19). The three children cast into the fiery furnace are saved by an angel. An angel is sent to

Daniel in the lions' den. The visions of Daniel are explained to him by angels (vii. 16; viii. 13-27; ix. 21, 22; xi. 2; xii. 5-13). The employment of such continuous angelology joined to "prodigality of miraculous development" presenting features differing from the Scriptures generally, and affording room for the supposition that the book is the production of a period when the manifestations of the spirit of prophecy were either more tinged with human imagination, or cast in a different mould from that of an earlier age of the church.

Historical inaccuracies, such as would be likely to arise from imperfect knowledge consequent upon a lapse of many years from the original transactions, are also apparent. "In the *third* year (it is said) of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem, and besieged it." It is elsewhere affirmed that "the *fourth* year of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon" (Jer. xxv. 1), a statement which invalidates the historical accuracy of the writer who calls Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon before he came to the throne, and places the siege of Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim. The death of Belshazzar, at the time of the capture of Babylon, presents an uncertain feature, at least one not confirmed, apart from dubiously deciphered inscriptions, by history, which relates that the reigning prince of Babylon experienced the mercy of the conqueror, and was subsequently entrusted with the principality of Caramania. It is said (chap. x. 1) that a vision was seen by Daniel "in the *third* (corrected by the LXX translator to the '*first*') year of Cyrus, king of Persia"; a statement contradicted by chap. i. 21, which limits Daniel's continuance in Babylon to the "first year of king Cyrus."

These inaccuracies, and more might be added, are inconsistent with the assumption that the book, in its present form, was written by an eye-witness of the events it records, and agree better with the supposition that it is a resetting of ancient annals by a later hand. It may also be observed

that the numerous dates recorded in the book afford no proof of correctness; similar positiveness with regard to dates being found in the apocryphal books of 2 Esdras and Baruch.

To recapitulate—1. *The diversity of languages in which the book is written*; 2. *The place it occupies in the Hebrew canon*; 3. *The use of Greek and Persian words*; 4. *The style of the book differing from the writings of the Captivity*; 5. *The historical character of the book extending to but not beyond the age of Antiochus Epiphanes*; 6. *The marvellous narrations and historical inaccuracies which have aroused suspicion from the earliest times*: are so many distinct and strong reasons for affixing a date later than that usually assigned to the Book of Daniel. Not that a Maccabean date is felt by us to be necessary in order to secure an interpretation suited to the times of Antiochus; for whether the book be predictive or historical, of the age of the Captivity or of a subsequent period, it can have but one solution. It may not perhaps be unreasonable to infer that it is partly a compilation and rearrangement of more ancient annals,¹ and partly the composition of some learned and pious Jew, who lived at a period subsequent to the events it describes, probably whilst his countrymen were still engaged in their patriotic struggle against their persecutors, and following up the advantages they had won from Antiochus Epiphanes. At this juncture, when the issue of the contest between the Jews and their Syrian oppressors hung doubtful in the balance, the writer of this remarkable book throws the weight of prophetic influence into the scale, and by recounting the heroic endurance of the sainted martyrs of their race,

¹ If it had been shown, which is not the case, that the Chaldee of Daniel bears no trace of later date than that of Ezra, the argument drawn from this against a Maccabean editorship would be considerably weakened by the circumstance that the writer may have incorporated into his book fragments of ancient annals which had doubtless been handed down in their original form. It is patent to common sense that Persian words must have been little better than Greek to Nebuchadnezzar, whilst the use by that monarch of Greek words is simply incomprehensible.

oracularly animates the holy people to perseverance in the strife. With this view he avails himself of the *prestige* of a character celebrated in Jewish story, and enunciates his historico-prophetic visions under the name and authority of Daniel. It will not require much argument to show that such a book at such a time may have afforded material aid and encouragement to the Jewish patriots¹—may have supported them under trial by the remembrance of former interpositions in behalf of the chosen people—may have reminded them that the Lord knows how to deliver his servants, whether from a “burning fiery furnace,” or from excruciating tortures “wearing out the saints of the Most High”—may have roused them to deeds of more than mortal daring and evoked a spirit of devoted and almost superhuman courage—the prophetic word luring them on to victory, and unfolding to their enthusiastic gaze the triumphant consummation which was to crown their efforts, and “the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, given to the people of the saints of the Most High.”

¹ Judas Maccabeus appears to have given similar encouragement to his soldiers by relating to them a dream “worthy to be believed, as if it had been so indeed, which did not a little rejoice them.” And this was his vision, that in answer to the prayer of Onias, who had been high priest, the prophet Jeremiah appeared to him, and gave him a golden sword, with the words, “Take this holy sword, a gift from God, with which thou shalt wound the adversaries” (2 Macc. xv. 11-16).

CHAPTER II.

THE LEGENDS OF THE CAPTIVITY.

IT may seem extraordinary that an event of such importance as the sojourn of the Jews for seventy years in Babylon should be passed over without memorial, and that no trace should be found in history, properly so called, of occurrences which took place during that period. It is true that a plaintive Psalm (cxxxvii.), of a later date than the time of David, describes the mournful attitude of the exiles as they sat by the waters of Babylon, the ill-timed request of those that led them away captive for "a song and melody in their heaviness," the affectionate yearning for their beloved Jerusalem, and their fierce imprecation on their heathen conquerors; but with this exception no adequate record is to be found of their condition during the exile. This deficiency is but ill supplied by the miraculous stories which find expression in the Book of Daniel; the nature of the tales themselves, as well as the foreign dialect in which they are couched, appearing to warrant the conclusion that they are of Chaldean origin and of an unhistorical character. It is worthy of notice that these "Legends of the Captivity," as they may be called, describe for the most part successful resistance to religious coercion, and record acts of Divine interposition in behalf of martyrs for conscience' sake. Among these we may instance: the rejection of the king's meat and wine for pulse and water; the refusal to worship the golden image; the non-compliance with the command to abstain from all worship save regal deification: no sufficient reason being apparent for the introduction of these topics to the exclusion of others, except their applicability to a similar oppression experienced at a later period. These, with the addition of contests of hermeneutical skill between the Chaldean magicians and the

prophet, in which the superior wisdom of the latter is invariably asserted, make up that portion of the book which may be called the personal biography of Daniel. The selection of these subjects in preference to other legends¹ of the Captivity, may be accounted for by the fact that the religious intolerance of the monarchs of Babylon corresponded with that manifested by Antiochus Epiphanes, and that the persecution of the Babylonian was no mean type of that of the Syrian period. A similar application of these ancient annals is found in the address of Mattathias to his heroic sons who are encouraged to resist the tyrant by the example of the same individuals who occupy a place in the prophetic narrative. "Ananias, Azarias, and Misael (it is said), by believing were saved out of the flame. Daniel for his innocency was delivered from the mouth of lions." This patriotic exhortation of the dying ruler is conceived in the spirit and presents features similar to those of the Book of Daniel, from which it is most probably derived. It may be described as an epitome of the earlier work, embracing the same period of persecution, and furnishing the same instances of patient endurance as the former. It holds out the fortitude of the saints of the Babylonian as an incentive to those of the Syrian tribulation, and stimulates the exertions of the Jewish patriots of the days of Antiochus by the hope of similar deliverance. To this it may be added, that the only instances of religious coercion recorded in the Jewish scriptures are those of the days of Nebuchadnezzar and Antiochus, and that one season of persecution would naturally be like another.

In instituting a comparison between these eras of martyrdom, it will be our endeavour to show that the one served as a

¹ The legends of the Captivity not recorded in the canonical Scriptures are: 1. The history of Bel and the Dragon. 2. Susanna and the elders. 3. The Song of the three holy children. 4. The Epistle of Jeremy. 5. The Prayer of Manasses. 6. The burning of Zedekiah and Ahab. 7. The story of Habakkuk bringing the dinner to Daniel in the lions' den. 8. The prediction of Nebuchadnezzar recorded by Abydenus. 9. The tower built by Daniel at Ecbatana (Ant. x. 11).

model for the other, and that the writer exhibited a just appreciation of his subject when he applied the circumstances of the former to those of the latter tribulation. Amongst these spirit-stirring reminiscences of days gone by, we may notice first :

THE ASCETICISM OF DANIEL AND HIS COMPANIONS.

The historical portion of the Book of Daniel opens with the invasion of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in the third year (the *fourth* year, Jer. xxv.) of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah. The monarchs of Nineveh had previously carried Israel away captive and "placed them in Halah and Habor, by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes"; the king of Babylon completes the downfall of Judah, and carries them captive to Babylon as Israel had been taken to Assyria. Among the exiles transplanted, according to the barbarous custom of eastern nations, into a new country, were four young men of great personal beauty and royal parentage, "such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans." With this view Daniel and his companions are selected from the rest, and with the intention of completely detaching them from the peculiar habits of their own nation, their Jewish names are not only changed for those of Chaldean origin, but they are nourished with a daily provision of food from the king's table. Of these young men, Daniel is conspicuous for his adherence to the religion of his fathers. He purposes in his heart that he will not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat which had been offered in sacrifice to idols, nor with the wine which had been poured out in libations ; but desires of *Ha-Melzar*, "the prince of the eunuchs," "that he and his companions may be fed on pulse and water." Melzar, it would seem, "consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days (some indefinite period), and at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat" (i. 14, 15).

The design of the writer in introducing this refusal on the part of Daniel and his companions to partake of meats offered in sacrifice unto idols is sufficiently transparent on the supposition that the book is the production of the Maccabean age. A somewhat similar decree had gone forth against the Jews by the command of the Syrian tyrant. "In the day of the king's birth, every month they were brought by bitter constraint to eat of the sacrifices; and when the feast of Bacchus was kept, the Jews were compelled to go in procession to Bacchus, carrying ivy; moreover there went out a decree to the neighbouring cities of the heathen, by the suggestion of Ptolemee, against the Jews, that they should observe the same fashions and be partakers of their sacrifices; and whoso would not conform themselves to the manners of the Gentiles should be put to death" (2 Macc. vi. 7-9). In resistance to this unrighteous command to "forsake the law and the ordinances," Judas Maccabeus "with nine others, or thereabouts (himself the tenth), withdrew himself into the wilderness, . . . and fed on herbs continually, lest they should be partakers of the pollution" (2 Macc. v. 27). The position of the respective parties would seem to be analogous. The pulse and water of Daniel and his companions are significant of the herbs on which the Maccabean patriots supported life; and the daily provision of the king's wine and meat, of which the former were compelled to partake, is repeated in the "bitter constraint" with which the holy people were forced to eat of things sacrificed to idols; the successful abstemiousness of Daniel and his companions being adduced as an example to those placed in somewhat similar circumstances.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM.

Among a people whose tastes and habits led them to cultivate an acquaintance with the occult sciences, it is not a matter of surprise to find that dreams¹ and their interpretation

¹ "The primitive belief was that dreams were sent men from the gods or their instruction, warning, and encouragement. The whole history of

should occupy an important place ; and it is probable that in detaching these young men from the society of their fellow-captives, and in educating them at the king's cost, special regard was had to their instruction in the Chaldean philosophy. Of Daniel, in particular, it is said that he "had understanding in all visions and dreams," and the dream in question, which baffled the skill of the Chaldean soothsayers, was calculated to put his hermeneutical ability to a severe test. Not only was this dream not so much a personal revelation to the king himself as a vehicle of conveying ideas elsewhere enunciated, and moulded into its present shape with a view of appending an historical interpretation suited to the circumstances of the Maccabean period, but the difficulty of its interpretation was enhanced by the circumstance that the king had no remembrance of it after it had passed. Like some beautiful picture which, once seen, impresses the mind most deeply, but is now forgotten ; so this dream, once vividly presented to the imagination, vanished from the memory of the king. He requires of the wise men of Babylon, not only the interpretation, but the dream itself. The wise men answer that the king's request is unreasonable, and that "the gods whose dwelling is not with flesh" (*dii infirmitati humanæ non obnoxii*) could alone unravel such a mystery. But the dream has

antiquity is full of dreams attaching to the weightiest and most decisive events. . . . With the Greeks the interpretation of dreams formed a complete literature of itself. Artemidorus, whose treatise on the subject is extant, assures us he compiled it at the express bidding of Apollo, and that the science of interpretation of dreams occupied him day and night. Mainly with the view of collecting dreams, he took long journeys into Asia, Greece, and Italy, and he furnishes precise instructions for the method of soliciting the grace of a prophetic dream from the gods. It was a dream which determined the emperor Augustus to appear one day every year in the streets of Rome as a beggar. Galba took the precaution to have expiation made for a dream that disturbed him. This, too, was deemed necessary to avert ill consequences that might result from menacing dreams, to resort to certain deities called the *Averrunci*, and offer them incense and salted cakes of meal. When harassed by a dream people bathed in the sea, remained sitting a whole day on the ground, wallowed in filth, or besmeared themselves with it."—DÖLLINGER.

taken such a hold on the king's mind that he must know its purport and interpretation, however unreasonable the demand may be; and accordingly he requires of the wise men of Babylon, who affected an intercourse with Deity, the fulfilment of their pretensions, promising them the highest honours in the event of success, and threatening them with death in case of failure.¹

The design of the writer in depicting this remarkable dream was not only to present an outline of successive historical events from his own times to those of Antiochus, but to contrast the temporary character of the kingdoms of gold, and silver, and brass, and iron, with the enduring nature of the kingdom of the saints, which should not experience the vicissitudes of former kingdoms, but should "stand for ever."

A further object may have been to exalt the privileges of those who remained faithful to the covenant over those who had apostatized under Antiochus. The issue of the contest between Daniel and the wise men of Babylon is favourable to the former, and ends by showing that the dream which is unintelligible to the astrologers, magicians, and soothsayers, is easy of interpretation to the servant of Him who "giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding." Similar trials of hermeneutical skill between

¹ The dream of Nebuchadnezzar and its interpretation by Daniel present so close an agreement between that of Pharaoh and its interpretation by Joseph as to have suggested the conclusion that the former supplied the basis on which the latter was founded. Nor can it be denied that a remarkable similarity exists between the characters and the circumstances of the respective individuals. Of Joseph and of Daniel it may be affirmed with equal fitness that both were carried young into captivity; both cast into the pit; both compelled to assume heathen names; that both found favour in their house of bondage and conciliated their respective masters Potiphar and Arioch, possibly the executioners of the kings of Egypt and Babylon; that both were raised to the highest honours in consequence of the interpretation of dreams; and that both confessed this power was not their own; the former saying, "It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace"; the latter, "This secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living . . . there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets."

the prophet and the heathen magicians are of frequent occurrence, and end invariably with the same result; the superior wisdom of the former over that of the heathen *Casdim* being asserted in a conspicuous manner, and rewarded with the most splendid gifts (ii. 48; v. 29; vi. 3).

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S IMAGE OF GOLD.

"Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits; he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon." This plain, it is said, still bears the name of Dura; and here, it is thought, the Babylonian monarch set up the image of gold, or, more probably, overlaid with gold. This image, which must not be confounded with the historical image of the dream, may have been a statue of himself; the practice of these Eastern despots to receive divine honours rendering such an act not improbable on the part of this, the greatest of them all. (Compare, "Who is God but Nabuchodonosor?" (Judith vi. 2; iii. 8) with the petition of the Samaritans to king Antiochus Epiphanes the god, recorded by Josephus.) The stupendous height of the image, 60 $\times$ 6, out of all proportion as it is with the breadth, does not appear so incredible to us as it does to others. The knowledge we now have of those ancient empires allows us to believe that the Babylonians were competent to erect gigantic statues, and possessed of skill in the use of the precious metals to overlay them. Indeed, everything about that superb dynasty was colossal. Their ideas were as magnificent as their empire. What they could not accomplish by mechanical science they effected by numerical strength.

The dedication of this image appears to have been attended by all the official ceremony which a rude age could suggest. We may imagine, then, an enormous multitude, of "all people, and nations, and languages," assembled in one of the vast level tracts common to that region, to do homage, at a

pre-arranged signal of barbarous music,¹ to the golden representation of the great Babylonian autocrat, which his pride and self-sufficiency had set up.

To this universal idolatry there is an exception. Amidst the obsequious multitudes assembled on that plain, three young Jewish captives are found bold enough to refuse this act of homage, and to decline compliance with the customs of this heathen land. And this is done in the face of a terrible alternative: "If ye worship not ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace, and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?"

The reply of these young men is calm and dignified. "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter: if it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thy hand, O king." It would be difficult to furnish adequate images of the fury of the Babylonian autocrat at this unexpected refusal. Like the "king of fierce countenance" (viii. 23), "the form of his visage was changed" against the audacious recusants; he commands that the furnace should be heated one-seven times more than it was wont to be heated; orders the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

We are disposed to think that this narrative is based on the cruel practice of burning alive Jewish captives, an atrocity of which the Legends of the Captivity afford an example.²

¹ These musical instruments are distinguished by the names of cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, with perhaps as much accuracy of description as the titles of judges, treasurers, counsellors, and sheriffs are applied to the viziers of the province of Babylon.

² This practice appears to have been so common with the kings of Babylon as to have fallen into proverbial use. Two false prophets, according to Jeremiah, suffered this punishment; and they of the Captivity were to take up a curse against similar impostors, and to say, "The Lord make thee like Zedekiah, and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire" (Jer. xxix. 22).

An interval, however, of more than four centuries from the date of the original transaction is sufficient to account for the prodigies with which it is encircled. The versions of Theodotion and the LXX exhibit a still stronger predilection for the marvellous, by asserting that "the king's servants that put them in ceased not to make the oven hot with resin, pitch, tow, and small wood : so that the flame streamed forth above the furnace *forty and nine cubits!* and it passed through and burned those Chaldeans it found about the furnace" (Song of the Three Holy Children, 23, 24, 25). In addition to this, a hymn of some sixty-seven verses is put into the mouths of the captives as they walked in the midst of the fire, to which Nebuchadnezzar and his satraps are supposed to listen. Nor is this to be wondered at. The age which we have concluded to be that of the writer was credulous in the extreme. The heathen were too much accustomed to the prodigious marvels of their own mythology to question the more sober narrations of Daniel. The Jews were fast following in their steps, and nothing was deemed incredible.

The coincidence between the scene we have depicted and the circumstances of the holy people is too obvious to need comment. A second Nebuchadnezzar had arisen in the person of Antiochus, whose religious intolerance declared itself in the attempt to coerce all those with whom he came in contact to worship the gods of his own adoration. With this view he spared neither bribes nor torture. He conceived the insane idea of Hellenizing a nation proverbially inflexible in its religious sentiments, and received the superb answer : "Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." It would be difficult to find parallels more closely fitting with each other than those which may be drawn between the Babylonian and the Syrian tyrants. The dedication of the golden image on the plain of Dura corresponds to the dedication of the temple at Jerusalem to Jupiter Olympius ; and the compulsory worship of the three children to similar

coercion at the village of Modin. The destruction of the men who execute the king's commands reappears in the slaughter by Mattathias of the commissioners of Antiochus; and the faithfulness of the martyrs of the age of Daniel is reproduced in the steadfastness of those of the latter tribulation. In a word, it would appear simply impossible to account for the reiterated descriptions of patient endurance under trial and glorious deliverance out of trouble, which run like a thread throughout the Book of Daniel, except on the hypothesis that circumstances had arisen demanding the exercise of similar endurance, and fostering the hope of similar deliverance.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S MADNESS.

The encyclical¹ letter contained in chap. iv., expressive of contrition and deep humility, and addressed by Nebuchadnezzar to "all people, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth," represents that monarch condemned, on account of his pride, to lose his reason, and to become a monomaniac for a period of seven years. At the expiration of this time, during which his vast empire is left without a ruler, — a circumstance unnoticed by sacred or profane historians, — his reason is said to be restored to him, and he resumes the government of his kingdom. The machinery made use of by the writer to describe this extraordinary event is similar to that before employed. The king, as in chap. ii., dreams a dream, which none of the wise men of Babylon can interpret. He sees a "tree in the midst of the earth" (comp. Ezek. xxxi.) whose height was great, and reached unto heaven. In the "visions of his head upon his bed" he also sees "a

¹ The fourth chapter appears to have the form of a letter addressed by Nebuchadnezzar to all the subjects of his vast empire. It is prefixed in the LXX with the words Ἀρχὴ τῆς Ἐπιστολῆς. The first three verses are not found in the LXX, and are marked as doubtful by Theodotion.

watcher¹ and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it ; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field ; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him " (iv. 22). Daniel is then sent for to give the interpretation. He explains the tree of the king himself, whose greatness had grown and reached unto heaven. The hewing down of the tree, and the stump left in the earth till seven times should pass over it, is interpreted of the deposition of Nebuchadnezzar from his sovereignty and his loss of reason for a period of seven years ; at the end of which time, when his pride should be sufficiently abased, his reason should return to him, and he should be again established in his kingdom. " All this (says the sacred narrative) came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty ? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken ; The kingdom is departed from thee, and they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field : they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou knowest that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will " ² (iv. 21-32).

¹ " Et ecce, vigil, *isque sanctus*, de cælo descendebat . . . Scholion codicis Alexandrini apud Theodot. : Τὸ δὲ εἶρ (*hēr*) οὐδὲν ἕτερον ἢ ἀγγελιοφόρος καὶ ἀγγέλων ἐρμηνεύεται—nomen angelorum, quippe qui rem ipsis creditam custodiunt " (Maurer).

² It appears strange that so remarkable an event as the insanity of Nebuchadnezzar should have been passed over in silence by all post-exile writers, as well as by those numerous profane historians who have recorded so many of the deeds of the great king. Indeed, so improbable did the contents of this chapter appear to the church of former times, that they resorted to an allegorical interpretation. The fall of the king from

And in selecting this subject from the annals of the Captivity, the writer may have wished to draw a parallel between the circumstances of the Babylonian and Syrian monarchs. The pride of the one at the sight of his splendid capital would seem reproduced in the presumption of the other who thought "he could reach to the stars of heaven"; the heaven-sent madness of the former finds a counterpart in the frantic conduct of the latter, who obtained the *sobriquet* of 'Επιμανής, the madman; the humble confession of the first, "they that walk in pride He is able to abase," is repeated almost *verbatim* in the similar acknowledgment of the second, "it is meet to be subject unto God, and that a man that is mortal should not proudly think of himself as if he were God"; whilst the encyclical letter of Nebuchadnezzar, expressive of repentance, and addressed to all people, and nations, and languages, is answered by the contrite letters written by Antiochus to the Jews, "containing the form of a supplication" (2 Macc. ix.). And a character more suited to the writer's purpose could not have been found in the range of sacred history; the circumstances of Nebuchadnezzar corresponding more closely with those of Antiochus than with those of any other persecutor of the holy people. The former invaded Judea, destroyed the temple, carried away the holy vessels,

the height of regal dignity to the level of the brute creation, typified in their estimation "Satan, as lightning falling down from heaven" (Luke x. 18); or the dragon cast out into the earth, and drawing with him the third part of the stars of heaven (Rev. xii.). It was also deemed incredible that a man should be fed on grass for seven years, living for that period among beasts without injury, and that the throne should be kept vacant for a madman for so long a time. Jerome, however, finds fault with such incredulity, and argues that the circumstance of a man being changed into a beast is not so marvellous as that of men being changed into flowers, and trees and stars, and stones, according to ancient mythology. It is possible indeed to conceive that the madness of Nebuchadnezzar may be resolved into a rare disease called lycanthropy, in which the sufferers imagined themselves changed into wolves, and imitated their cries; but it is more difficult to believe that the period over which the malady of the heathen prince extended should be "seven" years, "seven" being a Jewish number of perfection, and inapplicable to the circumstances of a heathen monarch.

compelled the captive Jews to forsake their own religion, and to worship the golden image which he had set up. These abominations are repeated by the latter in an aggravated form. Again is Judea invaded by the "armies of the aliens," the temple violated, the holy vessels plundered, and the Jews compelled to forsake the worship of Jehovah for that of Roman (or Grecian) deities. A parallelism so complete and harmonious was not to be lightly passed by. Our prophet, therefore, with an admirable discretion, preferred the times of Nebuchadnezzar to those of Sennacherib, or any other invader, as more fully illustrative of the calamities he wished to describe; made the legends, which the prolonged period of exile doubtless furnished in great abundance, the foundation of his spirit-stirring and patriotic episodes; encouraged his countrymen, by the recollection of former deliverances, to resist to the death the attempts upon their civil and religious freedom; and sent forth his true-hearted appeal under the name and authority of a revered prophet of his nation; thus securing a consideration for his subject which he could not have otherwise obtained.

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.

"Belshazzar,¹ the king, made a great feast to a thousand (LXX, 2000) of his lords, and drank wine before (or over against) the thousand." This feast may have been made in honour of some of the gods of Babylon, for it is said that "they drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone." This banquet was distinguished from others of similar character by a deed

¹ The identity of Belshazzar has long been a matter of dispute. He is called in this chapter the "son" of Nebuchadnezzar, and the latter is continually spoken of as his father (v. 2, 11, 13, 18); but Evil-Merodach succeeded Nebuchadnezzar in the kingdom (Jer. lii. 31), and the time of Babylon's capture is fixed by the same prophet in the third generation from Nebuchadnezzar—"All nations shall serve him and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come" (Jer. xxvii. 7).

of wanton impiety. "Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, (*jam temulentus*) commanded to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, that the king and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein." Josephus informs us that "Nebuchadnezzar had taken them out of the temple at Jerusalem, but had not made use of them, but had put them into his own temple." Now, for the first time, they are brought from the spot where they had been kept with superstitious reverence, and are desecrated by libations poured in honour of the Babylonian deities.

"In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand (comp. Ezek. ii. 9, viii. 3) and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall, and the king saw the part (the extremity) of the hand that wrote." The words traced by these superhuman fingers are three in number; the first being repeated possibly by way of emphasis. "MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it. TEKEL; thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting. PERES; thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians"—to the Mede and to the Persian. The last word, especially in its plural form PHARSIN, bearing an evident affinity to "Persians." A short message, it is true, but one of awful significance to that impious monarch: for "in that night," that night of wanton insult and bold defiance of the Majesty of heaven, that night of gross licentiousness and revolting intemperance, the narrative says (although the contrary is stated by Berosus) "was Belshazzar king of the Chaldeans slain."

It is conceived that the foundation of this dramatic representation is to be found in the description given by Jeremiah of the sudden capture of Babylon by the Medes and Persians, at a season of furious revelry, during which "her princes, *and her wise men*, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men," should be made "drunken," and should "sleep a perpetual sleep, and not awake" (Jer. li. 32-57). As the "cedar

in Lebanon" (Ezek. xxxi.) supplied the basis of the great tree hewn down of Daniel iv. ; so the prophecy of Jeremiah may have furnished the materials out of which the writer drew his highly-wrought yet fundamentally truthful narrative. Under the figure of the magnificent banquet, so suddenly and mysteriously interrupted, he not only marked the period of the dissolution of the great Babylonian empire, but endeavoured to show that its last monarch stood upon the verge of an approaching crisis, that God had numbered the years of his kingdom and finished it, that the Persian mule,¹ aided by his associate the Mede, was standing even then outside the walls of Babylon, and that "the very time of his land had come."

And in recasting the prophecy of Jeremiah into its present form the Maccabean editor, according to his usual custom, seems to have referred pointedly to the circumstances of his own age. The rare and peculiar offence of Belshazzar was impiety. Out of mere wantonness of insult to the Majesty on high he commanded the holy vessels to be introduced at his licentious feast. There could have been no temptation to commit this sacrilege. It was a profound and meditated reproach to the God of heaven. A similar act of wanton impiety was perpetrated by Antiochus when he set up the abomination which maketh desolate above the altar. It was a gratuitous and inexcusable provocation of Deity. It appears to have been done solely on the ground of insult to the God of heaven as well as to the religious feelings of the Jewish people, swine's flesh being an unclean offering forbidden by their law. In his obstinacy, moreover, as well as in impiety, Belshazzar was no inapt prototype of his Syrian imitator. Aware of the punishment which had overtaken

¹ A fragment of Abydenus, copied from Megasthenes, and preserved by Eusebius, relates that, whilst Nebuchadnezzar was walking on the roof of his palace he was seized with a divine inspiration, and predicted the conquest of Babylon by a Persian mule, whose associate should be a Mede. When he had delivered this oracular saying he disappeared (Præp. Evang., ix. 41).

his renowned ancestor on account of his pride, he carried his presumption to still greater lengths, and thereby incurred the stern rebuke of the prophet, "Thou knewest all this" (ver. 22, 23). The obstinacy of the Babylonian finds a counterpart in that of the Syrian offender. He, too, neglected the warning given by the fate of his father, the Great Antiochus, who perished ignominiously in the attempt to plunder the temple of Belus in Elymais. He, too, "lifted up himself against the Lord of heaven." He, too, laid impious hands upon the holy vessels of the temple, and "entered proudly into the sanctuary, and took away the golden altar, and the candlestick of light, and all the vessels thereof, and the table of the shewbread, and the pouring vessels, and the vials, and the censers of gold, and the veil, and the crowns, and the golden ornaments that were before the temple, all which he pulled off: he also took the silver, and the gold, and the precious vessels; also he took the hidden treasures which he found; and when he had taken all away he went into his own land" (1 Macc. i. 21-24). To these points of resemblance may be added that of the sudden fate which overtook Belshazzar, slain "in that night" of licentious revelry and wanton impiety, corresponding with the equally sudden end of Antiochus struck down by a divine judgment in the act of providing means for carrying on his iniquitous campaign against the Jews.

THE DEN OF LIONS.

"It pleased Darius¹ to set over the kingdom an hundred

¹ The question of the identity of "Darius, the Median," like that of Belshazzar, is one which has occupied the best attention of rival critics, but for which no solution seems likely to be found. According to Scripture (ix. 1) he is "the son of Ahasuerus of the seed of the Medes"! according to Josephus and Xenophon he is the son of Astyages. Eminent scholars of the past and present day have identified him with Cyaxares II., the uncle and father-in-law of Cyrus, with whom he was associated in the conquest of Babylon; a view confirmed by Josephus, who says that Babylon was taken by "Darius, the son of Astyages, who had another name among the Greeks" (*Ant.* x. 11).

and twenty princes (LXX, 'an hundred and twenty-seven satraps') which should be over the whole kingdom; and over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage. Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king sought to set him over the whole realm" (vi. 1-3).

This elevated position was not without its dangers. The presidents and princes of Babylon, indignant at the preference shown to a Jewish stranger, sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning his ministration of public affairs; but his integrity was too conspicuous to be impeached, "forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error¹ or fault found in him." Unable to convict him of political dishonesty, they hope to obtain a verdict against him concerning the law of his God. The stratagem was well and deeply laid. The unsuspecting monarch is persuaded to issue an edict still more unqualified than that of Nebuchadnezzar; the latter compelled his subjects to worship the golden image which he had set up, but the former forbade all worship except his own for thirty days. The artifice of the enemies of Daniel succeeded. Watching his conduct during the well-known hours of morning, noonday, and evening devotion, they find "Daniel praying and making supplication before his God," and, turning to the worst account the immutability of the savage laws of the Medes and Persians, cause him to be cast into the den

¹ The self-praise conspicuous throughout the book is a strong argument against its genuineness (comp. i. 19, 20; v. 11, 12; vi. 3, 4). This laudatory spirit, consistent enough in the mouth of others, is painful on the supposition that Daniel is the author of the book which bears his name. Contrast the humility of Moses, "Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt" (Exod. iii. 11; iv. 10); or that of Jeremiah, "Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child" (Jer. i. 6); or that of the Baptist, "I am not the Christ; (but only) the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias" (John i. 20-23).

of lions.¹ The distress of the king at the success of Daniel's enemies; his fruitless attempt to evade the severity of the Medo-Persian laws; his sleepless night (*pernoctavit incœnatus, et concubinas non admisit ad se*); his early visit to the lion-pit; his joy at finding Daniel unhurt; and his command to cast the accusers and their families into the den of the accused; complete the picture and give it a lively interest. The result of this remarkable deliverance corresponds with those of previous interpositions on behalf of the prophet and his companions. Darius makes a decree, similar to that of Nebuchadnezzar, to all people, and nations, and languages, that in every dominion of his kingdom "men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel." These kings, to whom Belshazzar may be added, are also represented as promoting Daniel to the highest honours, and as issuing edicts to their numerous subjects, of which no traces are to be found in history, commanding them to reverence the God of Israel.

The object of the Maccabean editor in recasting into its present shape an event which the lapse of years may have transferred from Jeremiah or Joseph to Daniel, is sufficiently apparent. A new Darius had arisen, demanding regal deification, "exalting and magnifying himself above every god," and "establishing a royal statute and a firm decree," that whosoever should ask a petition of any god or man, excepting those of his own adoration, should suffer a martyr's death. "He forbade them (says Josephus) to offer those sacrifices which they used to offer to God according to the law . . . he

¹ A den of lions, preposterous as the idea may seem to us, appears to have been a common if not a necessary appendage to the palace of an Eastern monarch; the noble animals being kept either as executioners for state criminals, or for the purpose of hunting, which seems to have been a favourite diversion of the kings of Babylon and Persia. With whatever difficulties the miraculous part of this history is encompassed, we do not consider the existence of a den of lions near the king's palace as one of them; the presence of such a menagerie being as much in accordance with Eastern habits, as that of astrologers at the court of the king of Babylon.

also compelled them to forsake the worship which they paid their own God, and to adore those whom he took to be gods . . . he also appointed overseers who should compel them to do what he commanded . . . and if there were any sacred book or law found it was destroyed ; and those with whom they were found miserably perished also " (Ant. xii. 5). In the face of this command men were found who, like Daniel, regarded not the decree which the king had signed, but who "were fully resolved and confirmed in themselves not to eat any unclean thing, wherefore they choose rather to die . . . that they might not profane the holy covenant ; so then they died " (1 Macc. i. 62, 63). And, thrice-blessed and holy martyrs, ye have not died in vain. A sacred light streaming adown the record of your glorious deeds kindles a flame of generous sympathy in every heart ; and ye stand forth to succeeding ages the revered and undying memorials of principle preferred before expediency, and of piety cherished above life itself.

That portion of the book which may be called the biography of Daniel ends with this deliverance : the remaining part being chiefly occupied with an historico-prophetic narration of events extending to the times of Antiochus Epiphanes. And it is only when viewed in the light in which we have attempted to present the subject that the former part of the book can be regarded in unity with the latter. Apart from the consideration that the historical is illustrative of the prophetic portion, no sufficient reason can be given for the intermixture of personal biography and prophetic vision in a work purporting to be written by the same individual. But when it is perceived that the scenes on the plain of Dura and at Babylon prefigure those elsewhere enacted ; that the idolatrous deifications of the monarchs of Babylon and Media reflect impieties of a subsequent age ; that the deliverances of the servants of God who trusted in Him in old time foreshadow the triumphs of those saints who should in later days possess the kingdom : the unity is restored, the plan of the

writer is seen to be consistent, and the prophetic vision resolves itself into one grand whole of absorbing interest having for its object the suffering and the rescue of the holy people.

CHAPTER III.

THE FOUR GREAT BEASTS.

BEFORE an interpretation of these mysterious symbols can be offered, it will be necessary to lay down a principle which may serve to unlock their meaning. This principle assumes that not only the visions of the Great Image (chap. ii.) and of the Four Great Beasts (chap. vii.), which are admitted to be double one of another, but that the subsequent visions of the Ram and the He-goat (chap. viii.), of the Seventy Weeks (chap. ix.), and the explanatory vision of chapters x., xi., xii., are component parts of one grand historico-prophetic scheme; in which, as is not unusual in similar writings, unity of subject is preserved under variety of description. Regarding these visions, therefore, as pictorial representations of the same events, we are led to confine their interpretation within a limited chronological period, marked out by the dominion of those kings who figure in this prophecy, rather than to extend their application to world-empires which have succeeded each other upon the earth.

A characteristic feature in these visions is their abrupt termination at a period beyond which the prophecy does not appear to extend. With the arrival of a well-defined epoch in the history of the Syrian successors of Alexander, a new character is introduced, whose extraordinary career it would seem the principal object of the writer of this book to describe. He is distinguished as one who should bear a tyrannous hate against the Jewish people, should speak great and blasphemous words against the Most High, should think to change times and laws, should pollute the sanctuary of strength, take away the daily sacrifice, and set up the abomination that maketh desolate; but, at the "time appointed," should be "cut off" by a miserable and remediless excision, and should

be "broken without"—*in want of*—(helping) "hand." With the destruction of this oppressor a climax is reached, and the end of the prophecy attained. Proceeding then upon the principle that the symbols, although varied, are representations of the same events, we shall interpret them in connection with and as mutually explanatory of each other; whilst the horizon by which they are circumscribed will confine our exegesis within the limits of the past, and prevent excursion of our inquiries into subjects with which the prophecy does not appear to be concerned.

The view not unfrequently taken of the Four Great Beasts which arise out of the sea of the heathen world, is that they represent the four world-empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, which have successively held dominion over the habitable earth.¹ To this it may be said that these symbols do not seem so much to encourage the idea of empires extending over the whole world, as to designate particular kings, whose affairs were mixed up with those of the Jewish people previous to the times of Antiochus. It is evident, moreover, that the last of these, the Roman power, does not come within the chronological term of these visions, and to this it may be added that no persecutor of the holy people arises out of that power whose actions correspond with those of the "little horn." This has been so strongly felt by the champions of the traditional view that they have been compelled to invent an imaginary Antichrist to be revealed hereafter, whose atrocities will, it is conjectured, square with those attributed to the "little horn": a theory which only eludes refutation because it offers no proof. Without how-

¹ This view of the Roman empire being the fourth "originated (says Mr. Westcott) at a time when the triumphant advent of Messiah was the object of immediate expectation, and the Roman empire appeared to be the last in the series of earthly kingdoms. The long interval of conflict which has followed the first advent found no place in the anticipations of the first Christians; and in succeeding ages the Roman period has been unnaturally prolonged to meet the requirements of a theory which took its rise in a state of thought which experience has proved false."

ever pausing to inquire how, or in what degree, the martyrs under the Syrian persecution could be cheered by the somewhat irrelevant announcement of the coming of Antichrist at some future crisis of the Church's history, we offer a few reasons which may show that the Roman empire does not seem to be intended by the last of these symbols.

That by the Fourth Great Beast the Roman empire is not signified, would seem plain from the circumstance that the above-named kingdom cannot with accuracy be said to succeed the three first kingdoms; the sway exercised by these being chiefly, if not entirely, Asiatic, and extending beyond the river Euphrates, whereas that river was the eastern limit of the Roman empire. Added to this, the Romans were not the immediate successors of the empire of Alexander, neither can their kingdom be said to have followed the Macedonian as the Babylonian was followed by the Median; the kingdom immediately succeeding the Asiatic rule of the successors of Alexander being that of the Parthians, and these were never brought under the Roman yoke. The world-empire of the Romans was, moreover, an afterthought with which it does not appear that the writer of this book was acquainted; nor indeed can it be asserted that Rome was at that time on a par with the great Asiatic kingdoms. Newly delivered from the desperate Punic struggles which at one time threatened the loss of national existence, she had but small and recently acquired possessions in Europe and none whatever in the East. In the third book of the Jewish Sibyl, whose date is certainly later than the time of Antiochus, the author of this singular *Apocaliptik* not only maintains the superiority of the great Asiatic kingdoms over that of Rome, but threatens that Asia should repay to the Romans all the evils done to them by the latter (*Orac. Sibyll.* iii. 350-364). A similar conclusion is arrived at from a comparison of the Beast rising up out of the sea, Rev. xiii. 1-10 (the Roman power), with the

Four Great Beasts of Daniel vii. ; for whilst the latter are distinguished by the separate symbols of a lion, a bear, a leopard, and the ten horns, the former comprises all of these four symbols, and must therefore be distinct from and subsequent to them.

THE KINGDOM OF GOLD.

CHAPTER II.

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee ; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold " (ii. 31, 32).

"Thou, O king, art a king of kings : for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. . . . Thou art this head of gold " (ii. 37, 38).

CHAPTER VII.

"Four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it " (vii. 3, 4).

The first of these symbols is explained in the book itself, and therefore little more need be said. Suffice it to observe that the glory of the Babylonian kingdom was at its height during the splendid reign of Nebuchadnezzar the "king of kings from the north " (Ezek. xxvi. 7), and may also be supposed to have expired with him. Nineveh, Egypt, Tyre, Judea, in addition to other conquests, yielded their treasures to embellish his superb city. The very bricks of his palace inscribed, as it is said, with his name, repeated the panegyric of Scripture : "Babylon the glory of kingdoms ; the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency." "The golden city." "The praise of the whole earth." "*Thou art this head of gold.*"

"The lion with eagle's wings," inconsistent as the notion may appear to us, would nevertheless be an appropriate symbol either of the Assyrian or Babylonian empires ; colossal specimens of winged lions, dug out of the ruins of Nineveh, being among the discoveries of this wonder-working age. The Babylonians are described under both of these

symbols. "The *lion* (says Jeremiah) is come up from his thicket . . . his horses are swifter than *eagles*" (Jer. iv. 7, 13; Deut. xxviii. 49; Ezek. xvii. 3, 12; Hab. i. 8). But although the emblem of a lion with eagle's wings might be typical generally of those ancient empires, peculiar features observable in the symbol itself confine its interpretation to one particular individual. "The wings thereof plucked *wherewith* (*Grotius*) it was lifted up from the earth, and its being made to stand on its feet as a man, and a man's heart given to it" (allusion to which seems to be made in the words, "Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him, and let seven times pass over him. . . . And at the end of the days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High": iv. 16, 34)—have an unmistakable reference to a well-known event in the history of the Babylonian monarch. We are compelled therefore to explain this symbol of the separate rule of Nebuchadnezzar as distinguished from that subsequently exercised by his descendants. Successive empires as they arise are marked by emblems significant of the number or the importance of their rulers. This first and greatest of them all stands by himself in the unity of magnificent dominion, "*Thou art this head of gold.*"

THE KINGDOM OF SILVER.

CHAPTER II.

"His breast and his arms of silver" (ii. 32).

"After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee" (ii. 39).

CHAPTER VII.

"Behold another beast, a second, like to a bear : and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it, between the teeth of it ; and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh" (vii. 5).

The indistinctness of the imagery under which the second beast is symbolised, leaves room for doubt respecting the manner in which the symbol should be interpreted. The

almost unanimous opinion of modern criticism is in favour of a separate Median kingdom, distinct from the united Medo-Persian empire under Cyrus. In support of this view it may be said that mention is made of a separate reign of Darius, that "Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old" (v. 31), and that Daniel "prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian" (vi. 28). In the vision of the Ram with two horns, explained in the book itself of the kings of Media and Persia (viii. 20), it is said that "the higher came up last"; not only distinguishing between the Median and Persian dynasties, but asserting a precedence in point of dignity for the latter. In the vision of chapter ii. this kingdom is represented as of "silver," and therefore "inferior" to the gold of the great Babylonian autocracy; the conquest of Babylon having been achieved not by the Medes alone, but by the military combination of various nations leagued against the common tyrant (Isa. xiii. 4; Jer. xxv. 9; li. 27, 28). This "silver" kingdom is likened to a bear, an implacable and savage animal, a comparison which agrees with the character given to the Medes in Holy Scripture. A peculiar feature of this symbol is that it raises up itself on one side (*εἰς ἓν μέρος*: Theodotion), or one dominion (*et dominatum unum crexit*: Maurer); significant perhaps of the erection of a separate Median rule prior to that of the united empire under Cyrus. The "three ribs in the mouth of it, between the teeth of it," may symbolise the three kingdoms of Lydia, Nineveh, and Babylon, subdued by that warlike nation; while the command, "Arise, devour much flesh," is directly applicable to the all-devouring character of the savage Medes: "they shall hold the bow and the lance; they are cruel and will not show mercy" (Jer. l. 42). The prophets, moreover, single out the Medes as the principal agents in the destruction of Babylon. "Behold I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver, and as for gold they shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash the

young men to pieces ; they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb ; their eye shall not spare children" (Isa. xiii. 17, 18). "The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, for His device is against Babylon to destroy it. . . . Prepare against her the nations with the kings of the Medes" (Jer. li. 11, 28). Media then, before it was absorbed into the Persian empire, was a distinct and powerful kingdom, and as the destroyer of Babylon it naturally takes the place of the second Beast. Herodotus plainly recognizes the dominion and separate character of the Median and Persian empires when he says : "thus ended the reign of Astyages, and the Medes bowed beneath the Persians, after having ruled Asia beyond the river Halys one hundred and twenty-eight years. . . . The Persians under Cyrus, by thus shaking off the yoke of Astyages, became the masters from that time forward of Asia" (sect. viii.). To the objection that the brief and unwarlike reign of Darius fails to satisfy the stern requisitions of the symbol, it may be answered that it comprises not only the personal dominion of that monarch, but the principal events in Median history ; a position confirmed by the clause, "it had three ribs in the mouth of it, between the teeth of it," significant of the victories of the Medes over Cræsus, and the capture of Nineveh and Babylon.

THE KINGDOM OF BRASS.

CHAPTER II.

"His belly and thighs of brass" (ii. 32).

"Another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth" (ii. 39).

CHAPTER VII.

"After this I beheld, and lo, another like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl ; the beast had also four heads, and dominion was given to it" (vii. 6).

CHAPTER VIII.

"A ram which had two horns . . . and one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. . . . The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia" (viii. 20).

CHAPTER XI.

"Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than they all; and by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia" (xi. 2).

The characteristics of the third kingdom are rapidity of conquest, universality of dominion, and fourfold division.

The first-named of these qualities finds suitable representation in the "thighs" of the great image, as well as in the "four wings" of the leopard, or panther, which shadow forth the terrific spring by which the Medo-Persian¹ kingdom leapt into existence. The rapid and victorious career of the Persian conqueror appears to have been the subject of especial prophecy. "Who raised up the righteous man (or righteousness) from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? He gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow" (Isa. xli. 2). Herodotus says of Cyrus that "wherever he marched, it was impossible for the nation to escape him." Xenophon adds that "he subdued east, west, north, and south." History abundantly confirms this description, and gives us the memorable picture of one of these Persian autocrats who "by his strength, through his riches, stirred up all against the realm of Grecia."

The universality of dominion which distinguished this third kingdom is not only a matter of common knowledge, but is insisted upon in the prophecy itself. It is described as "a kingdom of brass which shall bear rule over all the earth," and it is again repeated that "dominion was given to it." Ezra makes Cyrus say in his famous proclamation, "The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the

¹ Not to speak of the symbol of the ram with two horns explained of the united kings or kingdoms of Media and Persia, we read in Esther i. 3 of the "power of Persia and Media," and in x. 2 of the "chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia." Daniel also speaks of the "laws of the Medes and Persians," and says that Babylon should be "divided and given to the Medes and Persians." Nothing therefore can be plainer than that the writer intended to exhibit the duplex character of the Medo-Persian empire.

earth" (Ezra i. 2). To the west, Babylonia, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Asia Minor; to the north, Colchis, Armenia, Iberia, and the dwellers by the Caspian Sea; to the south, Judea, Egypt, Ethiopia, and Libya: obeyed the Persian sway. This third beast is distinguished from the rest by having four wings, as well as four heads. The "four wings on the back of it," *i.e.* two pairs of wings on the same beast (cf. Rev. xii. 14; 2 Esdras xi.) are significant of the joint empire of Darius and Cyrus, while the "four heads" which the beast had, in addition to the "four wings," are explained in the eleventh chapter of three kings yet standing up in Persia, and of a fourth far richer than all, who should stir up all against the realm of Grecia.

THE KINGDOM OF IRON.

CHAPTER II.

"The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron . . . and whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided . . . partly strong and partly broken . . . they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men" (ii. 40-43).

CHAPTER VII.

"A fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns" (vii. 7).

CHAPTER VIII.

"Behold an he-goat came from the west of the whole earth, and touched not the ground; and the he-goat had a notable horn between his two eyes. And he came to the ram which had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. . . . Therefore the he-goat waxed very great; and when he was strong the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. . . . Now that (the great horn) being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power" (viii. 5-22).

CHAPTER XI.

"A mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven, and not to his posterity" (xi. 3, 4).

Whatever difference of opinion may exist with regard to the interpretation of the preceding symbols, there is an uniformity of sentiment respecting the fourth which makes it more than probable that it must be explained of the kingdom of Alexander and his successors. The principal characteristics of this kingdom, not inaptly symbolised by its metallic and earthen compounds, are terrific destructiveness and gigantic strength coupled with instability of purpose and want of united action. Resembling the Medo-Persian empire in the rapidity of its conquests (for the he-goat "touched not the ground" in the velocity of his career from west to east), the fourth Macedonian beast was to stamp and bruise, to devour, tread down, and break in pieces: adding permanent subjugation and incessant rending to indomitable ferocity and prodigality of human life. Coupled with this exceeding terrible-ness it was at the same time to exercise œcumenical sovereignty. In the vision of chapter ii. it is said of it that "as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things . . . shall it break in pieces and bruise"; in that of chapter vii., that it "brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it"; in chapter viii., the he-goat comes from the west "on the face of the whole earth"; and in chapter xi., a mighty king rules "with great dominion." To use the truthful words of Maccabean history: "he (Alexander) made many wars and won many strongholds, and slew the kings of the earth; and went through to the ends of the earth, and took spoils of many nations, insomuch that the earth was quiet (subdued) before him" (1 Macc. i. 2, 3). To one of these splendid conquests particular attention is directed. The overthrow of the Medo-Persian ram by the Grecian he-goat, when he "ran unto him in the fury of his power . . . and brake his two horns, and cast him down to the ground and stamped upon him," too exact as the description is for prophecy, has, as far as we know, never been disputed from the days of Josephus to the present time. Indeed so vivid is the symbolic imagery that we may almost in imagination "stand before the river"

as the Macedonian horse, led by their youthful and fiery monarch, dash over the Granicus to encounter the feeble myriads of Darius; or, marching with his hardy veterans across the burning plains of Asia, mark the prostration of the submissive Oriental before his brass-clad (vii. 19) warriors. As we peruse the historico-prophetic record, "the he-goat waxed very great, and when he was strong the great horn was broken," we seem perfectly to realize his romantic and almost superhuman career; at one time worshipped as the Son of Amun Ra, and the next moment hurled by the marsh-fever of Babylon, aggravated by intemperance, from a greatness which he shared with the immortal gods. "In the midst of designs (says Dr. Pusey) the vastest and most multiform probably which intelligent ambition ever conceived, when not yet thirty-three, Alexander perished." The picture is drawn with such vivid exactness and with so firm a hand that we feel we are not dealing with prophecy but history;¹ and that we are not examining an obscure presentiment of doubtful events of which the shadows fall dimly before, but a succinct yet faithful relation of past and most certain occurrences. This kingdom is subjected in the prophecy to a fourfold and a tenfold division, and that these refer to the same subject may be inferred from the circumstance that from both of these

¹ Daniel appears as confident on the subject of unmixed prophecy as on that of pure history. This may be inferred from a passage in Hippolytus, in which that ancient Father represents the prophet announcing events posterior to his own times in terms of equal positiveness with those of which he is supposed to be a witness. "Thou didst prophecy of the lion in Babylon, for that was the home of thy captivity: thou didst reveal the future history of the bear, for still thou wast in the world and didst see it fulfilled. Now thou tellest me of the pard; but how knowest thou of this, having already fallen asleep? Who taught thee to say these things unless it were He that formed thee from the birth? God, thou sayest, for thou didst speak the truth. The pard arose; the he-goat came: he smote the ram: he brake his horns: he trampled him under foot: he was exalted in his fall: the four horns arose after him. Rejoice then, blessed Daniel: thou wast not deceived: for all these things have come to pass."—*Hippolyti opera*. Ed. Fabricius, p. 16.

divisions arises the "little horn." The first of these, detailed at length in chapter viii., indubitably points to the partition of the Macedonian autocracy among the four potent successors of Alexander, Seleucus Nicator, Cassander, Ptolemy Lagi, and Lysimachus; or, as the same division is elsewhere expressed, "for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven." Besides this fourfold division of the Macedonian empire after the great horn (Alexander) was broken, the prophecy describes a further partition among ten Syro-Egyptian kings, for the beast has also "ten horns," and the kingdom is to be plucked up "for others besides those." This tenfold division of the kingdom of the Macedonian conqueror is also found in a remarkable passage of the third Sibylline book descriptive of the conquest of Asia by Alexander the Great, in which mention is made of the rule of a horn which should rise up among the ten horns,¹ showing not only the acquaintance of the writer with the Book of Daniel, but connecting the ten horns with the tenfold division of Alexander's kingdom. The peculiar characteristics of this kingdom are given in the prophecy with singular fidelity and minuteness. Together with firm and unyielding stability it should combine inherent weakness and suicidal disunion. The kingdom should be "divided," "partly strong and partly broken," "the strength of the iron mixed with miry clay"; its princes, although connected with each other by mutual alliance,² and "mingling with the seed of men," not "cleaving one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." Contemporaneous history affords abundant confirmation of the destructive yet unstable

¹ Ἐκ δέκα δὴ κεράτων παρὰ δὲ φυτὸν ἄλλο φυτεύσει.

— καὶ τότε δὴ παραφνύμενον κέρας ἄρξει.

Sib. Orac. iii. 397-400.

² "Antiochus, Deus a suis dictus, Laodicem, et Berenicem uxores duxit, Ptolemæi Philadelphi filias, teste Livio (quod conjugium per biennium tantum duravit). Et Magas, Philadelphi pater, Apamen duxit, filiam Antiochi, qui Seleuci fuerat filius, quod nos docet Pausanias in Atticis. Et Antiochus Magnus Cleopatram filiam suam collocavit in matrimonium Ptolemæo Epiphani" (et ipsum brevi solvendum).—GROTIUS.

qualities, the iron strength and clayey weakness of the Syro-Egyptian successors of Alexander. Their uninteresting career is a perpetual struggle for supremacy and an endless succession of international conflicts, till at last worn out by suicidal strife the "divided"¹ kingdom of the Seleucidæ and the Ptolemies fell a prey to the Romans.

It need scarcely be mentioned that considerable difference of opinion continues to exist with regard to these "ten horns." By some they have been interpreted of ten kings, exclusively Syrian, who preceded Antiochus : these, however, appear to have been only seven in number, Antiochus himself being the eighth ; although a contrary opinion is maintained by eminent critics. It has been further conjectured, from the fact of the number "ten" being a round number without specific numerical value in the Scriptures generally, and employed in an indefinite sense in the book itself (i. 14, 15, 20), that the "ten horns" are significant of the many kingdoms (*multa regna*) into which the empire was divided subsequently to the death of Alexander, when "his servants bare rule, every one in his place, and their sons after them many years." We are disposed to interpret the symbol of ten kings,² not exclusively Syrian, who were more or less mixed up with Jewish affairs during the period which preceded the rise of Antiochus Epiphanes,—a conclusion confirmed by the fact that chapter xi., which relates the fortunes of Alexander's successors with a precision too minute for prophecy, is occupied with the successes and reverses of ten kings of the North and South (Syria and Egypt), who for the most part make Palestine their scene of conflict.

But whichever of these theories we may adopt, it would

¹ LXX, διμερής—of two parts, thus adapting the prophecy to the Seleucidæ and the Ptolemies.

² "Dr. Pusey says, These cannot mean kings, but kingdoms. If so, in all consistency, the eleventh must also be a kingdom, not a king, and then how are we to explain the manifestly personal character given to it?"—J. J. S. PEROWNE.

appear morally certain that the "little horn" of chapter vii. cannot, without violence, be dissociated from the "little horn" of chapter viii. ; and that to interpret the former of Antichrist,¹ and the latter of Antiochus, not only exhibits obliquity of exegetical treatment, but an utter disregard of that continuous reiteration of the same events which must be admitted to be a chief characteristic of these prophecies. Similar qualities attributed to the subject of either vision render it imperative that they should be similarly interpreted ; and when to this it is added that the preceding symbols are allowed to shadow forth respectively the same historical events, exegetical consistency would seem to require that those immediately succeeding should not be explained of things so widely distant from each other as the impieties of the Syrian tyrant and the expected opposition of some future enemy of the Church. To the objection that they who consider the prophecy to have been written after the event ought to have no difficulty in finding a meaning for these symbols,—"it being as inconsistent with the *orthodox* (!) school to attempt to explain them as it would be in the *school of Porphyry* (!) not to explain them,"—it may be answered that the same may be urged against the books of Enoch and 2 Esdras, which, professedly containing historico-prophetic representations of events long passed, are still a weary trouble to the learned. Independently of the mysterious character of apocalyptic writings generally, the difficulty of interpretation is increased by the defective history of the period, as well as by the sameness of nomenclature which characterizes the descendants both of Ptolemy and Seleucus. It may, therefore, be no easy task to determine with accuracy the "ten kings which shall arise" in the latter time of the kingdom of the four notable ones, or even to specify with precision the

¹ If the "little horn" of chapter vii. is interpreted of Antichrist, and the "little horn" of chapter viii. of Antiochus, no reason can be given why the former should precede the latter. This *ὑστέρων πρότερον* is at variance with the chronological order everywhere observable in this book.

four potent successors of the Macedonian conqueror; symbolic prophecy, especially in cases where the same events are repeated under a variety of emblems, not admitting of a definite interpretation of particulars, although the general meaning may be sufficiently apparent.

Another feature peculiar to the Fourth Beast is its diversity "from all the beasts that were before it"; or, as the same idea is elsewhere expressed, "The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse (*in evils*, LXX) from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces": a diversity which led to a difficulty of description, for whilst preceding kingdoms are represented by corresponding symbols, none can be found to represent the "*monstrum, horrendum, informe, ingens*,"—the unnatural ten-horned beast incapable of delineation. A reason for this diversity may be gathered from the internecine contests of these Syrian and Egyptian kings, these princes not being "of one mind, nor well-minded to one another" (LXX); adding to the lust of foreign conquest the miseries of domestic wars, and "multiplying evils upon earth" (1 Macc. i. 9), as much by their international struggles for supremacy as by their ungovernable ambition. During the continuance of these exhausting conflicts, more fatal to the holy people than the spoliations of Alexander or even the ruin effected by the Babylonian invader, princes, trained in the pitiless school of the Macedonian conqueror, trampled down without compunction all who opposed their insatiable desires, and turned "the habitable earth" into shambles in their path to universal empire. The miseries of that period, especially as far as the holy people were concerned, were never exceeded by any former troubles in their eventful history. Situated midway between Syria and Egypt, Judea, like the Low Countries in days of European warfare, became the battlefield of the contending parties, and to whichever side victory might incline, its wretched inhabitants were alike the sufferers. Whether the kings of Egypt (the south) pre-

vailed over the kings of Syria (the north), or the kings of Syria over the kings of Egypt, this, to them, was only a change of masters. It is not then to be wondered at that a period like this, deeply stained with blood, and presenting no respite from continuous and exterminating wars, should be characterized by emblems significant of unusual calamity, or that it should be affirmed of the Fourth Beast that it was "exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass."

CHAPTER IV.

THE LITTLE HORN.

THE symbol of the little horn has been explained of almost every remarkable personage, or of every startling phenomenon, which has agitated the world from the days of Daniel to the present time. Intense hatred of a cognate Church has driven the majority of Protestant interpreters to apply the symbol to the Church of Rome, that ecclesiastical bugbear which is immediately suggested to some minds as often as the word "beast" is met with in the Scriptures. A statement of the so-called arguments on which this, and similar theories, are supposed to be founded, would require a volume of greater dimensions than the present ; but perhaps the enumeration of them is less to be regretted when it is remembered that the interpretations are mutually destructive one of another. Others, again, have applied the symbol to Antichrist, and have explained the figures descriptive of the struggle between the Jewish patriots and their Syrian oppressor of some future contest between the Church and its great Antichristian adversary. With this view, verses 35-45 of chapter xi. have been eliminated from the context which is occupied with the history of Antiochus until his miserable death at the end of the chapter, and have been arbitrarily referred to a subject wholly foreign to the scope of the prophecy. The principle which we have adopted precludes this system of capricious interpretation and confines the field of inquiry within the chronological horizon of the writer. If such limitation increases the difficulty of finding a suitable meaning, it also adds, if it can be found, to its conclusiveness ; for to obtain within a given cycle a more satisfactory interpretation than that for which long periods have been vainly exhausted, is a strong presumption in favour of truth.

In our opinion the symbol of the "little horn" can only represent the great oppressor of the Jewish nation, Antiochus Epiphanes. It would, we think, be simply difficult to find another who could answer to the character and fulfil the description given of him by Daniel. And in order to maintain this view there is no necessity, as is sometimes thought, to press the question of a Maccabean date; for even on the supposition that the Book of Daniel is a genuine work of the time of the Captivity, no other interpretation could be seriously entertained. This opinion is firmly held by Moses Stuart. "From this dynasty (the divided Grecian dominion) springs Antiochus (vii. 8, 20), who is most graphically described (ver. 25) as one who shall 'speak great words against the Most High and shall wear out the saints of the Most High.'" He is supported in this view by nearly every writer of consideration who has given his thoughts on this subject to the world. In endeavouring to maintain this position we shall first cite the passages in which the persecutor, and the qualities ascribed to him, are set forth, and then show from contemporaneous and subsequent history their fulfilment in the person and circumstances of Antiochus Epiphanes.

I. THE RISE OF ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES.

"I considered the horns; and behold there came up among them (the ten horns) another little horn" (vii. 8).

"Another (horn) shall rise after them (the ten horns), and he shall be diverse from the first" (vii. 24).

"And out of one of them (the four notable ones) came forth a little horn" (viii. 9).

"In the latter time of their kingdom (the four notable ones) when the transgressors are come to the full (*ubi compleverint peccatores peccata sua*), a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up" (viii. 23).

"And in his estate (Seleucus Philopator) shall stand up a vile person (Antiochus Epiphanes) to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom" (xi. 21).

Antiochus Epiphanes, the second son of Antiochus the Great, sprang from the stock of the Syrian inheritors of the

Macedonian conquests. "Out of them (the four potent successors of Alexander) arose another lesser horn, Antiochus Epiphanes" (Ant. x. 11). This direct testimony of Josephus is confirmed by the writer of the First Book of Maccabees: "There came out of them (the servants of Alexander who all put crowns upon themselves) a wicked root, *ρίζα ἀμαρτωλός*, Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes, son of Antiochus the king" (1 Macc. i. 10). He is described as a "little horn" (*parvis initiiis*) less than the four notable ones who succeeded the Macedonian conqueror, or the ten Syro-Egyptian horns; whilst the surname "Epiphanes," although common to other kings, was given to him on account of the unenviable notoriety which he acquired by his surreptitious seizure of the throne of Syria. The time of his appearance on the scene of Jewish affairs is distinguished as one of great national apostasy. The conquests of Alexander had introduced Greek customs and modes of thought among the inhabitants of Palestine, and it required but slight external pressure to draw away a people, half ashamed of their eccentric habits and the peculiarities of their burdensome ceremonial, from the faith of their forefathers. Grecian games were already in vogue at Jerusalem, and the foreign appellations of Jason and Menelaus were assumed by the high priests Jesus and Onias themselves (Ant. xii. 5). Citizens of Jerusalem were not ashamed to call themselves Antiochians, or to send special messengers "to the sacrifice of Hercules" at Tyre (2 Macc. iv. 9-19). In the language of Daniel, "transgressors were come to the full," and the time had arrived when the wicked should "do wickedly against the covenant" (viii. 23; xi. 32); or, as it is elsewhere described, when "wicked men persuaded many . . . and made themselves uncircumcised and forsook the holy covenant" (1 Macc. i. 11-15). The accession of Antiochus to the Syrian throne at this critical period, while it greatly favoured the designs of the Hellenizing party, prepared the way, as in former periods of Jewish history, for the punishment of the national wickedness; and, to use the language of the

prophet, "an host (the Jewish people) was given (to be destroyed), *together with* the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression" (viii. 12). The same idea is insisted upon by the Maccabean writer: "not setting by the honours of their fathers, but liking the glory of the Grecians best of all, by reason whereof sore calamity came upon them; for they had them to be their enemies and avengers whose custom they followed so earnestly, and unto whom they desired to be like in all things" (2 Macc. iv. 15, 16). Thus their sin became their punishment, and their desertion of the sanctuary was avenged in the pollution of the sanctuary itself.

II. THE CONQUESTS OF ANTIOCHUS.

"Another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots" (vii. 8). ("And three of the first horns were dried up by it," LXX.)

"Before whom three fell" (vii. 20).

"He shall subdue three kings" (vii. 24).

"He waxed exceeding great toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land" (viii. 9).

"Within few days he (Seleucus Philopator) shall be destroyed, neither in anger nor in battle . . . the arms of the overflower (Heliodorus) shall be broken before him . . . yea, also the prince of the covenant" (Demetrius) (xi. 21-22).

The three horns "plucked up by the roots" by Antiochus are defined to be "three of the first horns"—the ten horns before mentioned—"among" which Antiochus himself arises. These we have thought to be Seleucus Philopator, his brother, assassinated by Heliodorus probably at the instigation of Antiochus; Heliodorus himself, whilst "taking the kingdom by violence," ἐς τὴν ἀρχὴν βιαζόμενον (Appian); and Demetrius, his nephew, unjustly detained by him as a hostage at Rome.

Of the first of these it is said in the prophecy itself that he should be "destroyed neither in anger nor in battle" (*non in fervore pugnae, sine gloria bellicâ, sed morte infaustâ, insidiis oppressus Heliodorî*); words which, although not directly

attributing his murder to Antiochus, leave room for the supposition that his immediate successor was not altogether guiltless : and of the second and third, that they should be "overflowed and broken before him." It will also be observed that these three kings are contemporaneous with Antiochus, being in fact the three last-mentioned of ten Syro-Egyptian kings, who introduce and are connected with the history of the "vile person" (xi. 21, 22) ; a circumstance which serves to illustrate the apparent contradiction that the "little horn" arises both "among" and "after" the ten horns.¹

The area over which the conquests of Antiochus extend is also marked out with characteristic precision : their direction pointing "toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land." These particulars find a realization in the history of those times. Twice (some say four times) he

¹ The terms in which the rise of Antiochus is expressed are too vaguely conceived to warrant the positive conclusion that by the "ten horns" kings of Syria are alone intended, and that he must therefore be the eleventh Syrian king. Of this no intimation is given in the book itself ; and history abundantly testifies that he is the eighth Syrian king, and that his reign is contemporary with that of the sixth Ptolemy. "There would be a fixed principle (supposes an objector) in selecting either house, the Ptolemies or the Seleucidæ ; but either house furnishes less than ten, both together more than ten." No such selection, however, is demanded by the terms in which the prophecy is couched. The objection that, since the narrative is posterior to the event, no difficulty ought to be experienced in the interpretation of the ten horns, or the three uprooted by the little horn, falls to the ground when the symbolic character in which these events are set forth is taken into account. The characteristic of prophecy, when couched in ordinary language, is vagueness with reference to particulars ; but when, as in the present case, the visions are clothed in symbolic dress, the meaning might be difficult of apprehension even to contemporaries themselves. Similar obscurity is apparent in the description of the "great horn" spoken of in the Book of Enoch, whom the ravens and ravenous birds try to destroy. As in Daniel, the mention of this "great horn" occurs in a purely historical passage in which the writer gives an outline of sacred history from Adam to the time of the Maccabees. Interpreters, however, are much divided in their opinions whether the symbol refers to Judas Maccabeus or to John Hyrcanus.

invaded Egypt, the south (xi. 25-29, 40-43). He recovered the upper provinces of Syria, the east, from Ptolemy Philometor, who succeeded to them as the dower of his mother, Cleopatra (Bell. Jud. i. 1); and his devastations of the "pleasant land," Judea, are too well known to require comment. Josephus says with regard to his invasions of Egypt (the south) that "Antiochus resolved to make an expedition into Egypt . . . so he came with great forces to Pelusium, and circumvented Ptolemy Philometor by treachery ('they shall forecast devices against him,' xi. 25), and seized upon Egypt" (Ant. xii. 5). Driven from thence by the menace of the Roman legate, who charged him to let that country alone, he made an expedition against the city of Jerusalem: in the words of our prophet, "The ships of Chittim, (LXX, the Romans) shall come against him, therefore he shall be grieved and return and have indignation against the holy covenant" (xi. 30). His dominion over Syria and the eastern provinces extended "from the river Euphrates unto the borders of Egypt" (1 Macc. iii. 32); and when, in want of means to pay his troops preparatory to an intended invasion of Judea, he went into Persia to collect the taxes of that conquered country, "he left one Lysias governor of the kingdom as far as the bounds of Egypt, and of the lower Asia, and reaching from the river Euphrates" (Ant. xii. 7). Described as a "little horn" in the commencement of his reign, he afterwards increased to formidable dimensions; "waxing exceeding great," and, with the exception, perhaps, of the great Antiochus, his father, becoming the most magnificent of the Syro-Macedonian kings.

III. THE CRAFTY POLICY OF ANTIOCHUS.

"His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practise . . . and through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand, and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many" (viii. 24, 25).

"He shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries . . . and after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully . . . he shall

enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province . . . and he shall forecast his devices against the strongholds even for a time" (xi. 21, 23, 24).

"Antiochus Epiphanes (says Mr. Westcott) was given as a hostage to the Romans after his father's defeat at Magnesia. In B.C. 175 he was released by the intervention of his brother Seleucus, who substituted his own son Demetrius in his place. Antiochus was at Athens when Seleucus was assassinated by Heliodorus. He took advantage of his position, and by the assistance of Eumenes and Attalus easily expelled Heliodorus, who had usurped the crown, and himself 'obtained the kingdom by flatteries.'" The treacherous qualities by which Antiochus obtained possession of the Syrian kingdom to the exclusion of his nephew Demetrius, the lawful heir to the throne, receive ample confirmation from Josephus and the writers of the Maccabean history. "King Antiochus (says the former) returning out of Egypt for fear of the Romans, made an expedition against the city of Jerusalem; and when he was there, in the one hundred and forty-third year of the kingdom of the Seleucidæ, he took the city without fighting, those of his own party opening the gates to him . . . and pretending peace, he got possession of the city by treachery; at which time he spared not so much as those that admitted him into it, on account of the riches that lay in the temple" (Ant. xii. 5). Antiochus could the more easily play the part assigned to him, inasmuch as the Hellenistic party had secret friends within Jerusalem, headed by the impious Menelaus, who encouraged his insidious and oppressive acts (comp. 2 Macc. v.). The crafty policy of Antiochus seems to have been adopted by his lieutenant Apollonius. "The king (it is said) sent his chief collector of tribute unto the cities of Juda, who came unto Jerusalem with a great multitude, and spake peaceable words unto them, but all was deceit; for when they had given him credence, he fell suddenly upon the city, and smote it very sore" (1 Macc. i. 29, 30). "Antiochus (complains Josephus, contra Apion, ii. 7) had no just cause for

that ravage of our temple that he made : he only came to it when he wanted money without declaring himself an enemy, and attacked us while we were his associates and friends." We can scarcely fail to recognize in these actions a confirmation of the treacherous qualities ascribed by the prophet to Antiochus, "working deceitfully after the league made with him," confirming a covenant with many and then breaking it, making use of the traitorous conduct of the apostate Jews to further his own purposes, "circumventing" Ptolemy Philometor by treachery, and unjustly retaining his nephew as a Roman hostage ; these, and similar acts of perfidy, exhibit the character of a man who, whatever may have been his ability, appears to have been reckless and unscrupulous in carrying out his designs, and who on that account, as well as on others more particularly obnoxious to the Jews themselves, has handed down an infamous name to posterity.

IV. THE BLASPHEMIES OF ANTIOCHUS.

"In this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things" (vii. 8).

"I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake" (vii. 11).

"That horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows" (vii. 20).

"And he shall speak great words (*βλασφήμους λόγους*, Theodoret) against the Most High" (vii. 25).

"He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes" (viii. 25).

"He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods . . . neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god (this last clause is omitted by the LXX); for he shall magnify himself above all" (xi. 36, 37).

The peculiar feature in the character of Antiochus was not so much impiety, as a determination to coerce those who differed from him to his own religious standard. He had his "ism" like the enthusiasts of more recent times ; and, having kingly authority, sought to force it upon the world. Regardless of the (Syrian) god of his fathers, and possibly magnify-

ing himself above every god, he was not, as has been sometimes thought, altogether destitute of religious veneration.¹ It is distinctly asserted of him that in the place, or on the base of the statue of the god whom his fathers worshipped, he should "honour the God of forces;"² and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things: thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory" (xi. 38, 39). It would seem that Antiochus compelled his heathen subjects as well as the Jews to acknowledge this strange deity. The officers at Modin urge Mattathias to sacrifice, on the ground that not only the men of Judah and Jerusalem, but all the heathen (comp. 1 Macc. i. 42) have fulfilled the king's commandment; to which the noble answer is given, "Though all the nations that are under the king's dominion obey him, and fall away every one from the religion of their fathers, and give consent to his commandments, yet will I and my sons and my brethren walk in the covenant of our fathers" (1 Macc. ii. 19, 20). The only plea for this intolerance—a plea that must be put in for the persecutor in every age—is excess of zeal displaying itself in the attempt to overthrow the worship of every other object but that of its own choice.

It is not difficult to imagine what the effect of such proselytism would be upon a people like the Jews, conservative almost to bigotry on the question of religious worship. In their estimation, the propagator of the new faith was a blas-

¹ "In two great and right things his was truly a royal mind, in gifts to cities and worship of the gods."—LIV. xli. 20.

"In the sacrifices to the cities and in the honour to the gods he surpassed all who had reigned before him. This one may judge from the temple of Jupiter Olympius at Athens and the statues around the altar at Delos."—POLYBIUS.

² "Apparet agi de deo aliquo *bellico*. Qui cum Syris antea *ignotus* fuisse dicatur (*cf.* xi. 38, 39): probabiliter intelligendus est Jupiter Capitolinus cui templum Antiochiæ condere cæpit Antiochus."—(LIV. xli. 20).—MAURER.

phemer of the worst kind, and no terms of reproach were too base or too bitter to be applied to him. That Antiochus fully merited such invectives there can be little doubt. It is probable that he regarded the true God in the same light as those gods of his country whom he despised, and above whom he magnified himself. Josephus has preserved a letter addressed by the Samaritans to "King Antiochus Epiphanes the god;"¹ and his blasphemies against the God of heaven are confirmed (1 Macc. i. 21, 24), where he is said to have "entered proudly into the sanctuary," and to have spoken "very proudly." In 2 Macc. ix. 10 he is described as "one who thought he could reach to the stars of heaven"; no inapt commentary on the words, "He waxed great unto the host of heaven, and he cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground." Above all, his profanation of holy things, his shameless plunder of the temple which other heathen kings had been accustomed to respect, his wanton provocation of the national prejudices in setting up the idol altar above that of Jehovah, not only justify the description given of him by Daniel, but defy the annals of any period to produce a character in whom they can be realized with equal clearness. To the objection, scarce worthy of notice, that the "little horn" of chapter viii., which is admitted to represent Antiochus, does not correspond in all its features with the "little horn" of chapter vii., we would reply that the difference between these several descriptions is not greater than that between the Great Image of chapter ii. and the Four Great Beasts of chapter vii., in which the same ideas are allowed to be repeated under a variety of symbol and language; and it might, with equal propriety, be contended that the kingdoms

¹ "The reigning king (says Dr. Döllinger) of the Lagidæ as well as all his ancestors shared the temples and altars with the gods of the land. There were priests of the god Soter, of the gods Euergetæ, of the gods Philopator; and as soon as one Lagides succeeded his father on the throne, were he of age or but a minor, he was created a god forthwith, and the high priest at Alexandria was charged with his worship."

symbolized by the four metals of the first are not analogous to those set forth by the four beasts of the second, because in the former all mention is omitted of the "little horn." Let it be added to this, that in both chapters the characteristic features of the tyrant's history are never lost sight of. His persecution of the holy people, his blasphemies against the God of heaven, and his heaven-inflicted and miserable death, find a place in each: the variety of costume under which these ideas are set forth being used to avoid a wearisome tautology as well as for the purpose of delineating more graphically the person who is the subject of them.

V. THE PERSECUTIONS OF ANTIOCHUS.

"I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them" (vii. 21).

"He shall wear out the saints of the Most High . . . and they shall be given into his hand" (vii. 25).

"A king of fierce countenance and understanding dark sentences shall stand up . . . and he shall destroy wonderfully . . . and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people" (viii. 23, 24).

"They shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days" (xi. 33).

"And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end" (xi. 35).

"There shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation to that same time" (xii. 1).

"Many shall be purified and made white and tried" (xii. 10).

It is well known that the unenviable office here ascribed to Antiochus of "making war" (*i.e.* persecuting, comp. Rev. xi. 7) with the saints, and "wearing out (by tortures) the saints of the Most High," obtained its complete realization. "This king of fierce countenance"—*ἀναιδὴς προσώπω*, LXX—and of "furious mind," "whose look was more stout than his fellows," not only gave orders for the punishment of those who refused, at his suggestion, to forsake the law of their fathers, but, according to the writer of 2 Maccabees, presided himself over their abominable tortures. The tender mercies

of this royal executioner may be seen in an account of a mother and her seven sons put to death by him for refusing to eat swine's flesh. The eldest six suffered the extremity of barbarous cruelty in the presence of their mother. The last and youngest the tyrant agreed to spare if he would turn from the laws of his fathers ; and when he had vainly endeavoured to persuade him to apostatize, he attempted to induce the young man to save his life through the influence of his mother. But with more than Spartan firmness she exclaimed, " O my son, have pity upon me that bare thee, and brought thee up unto this age : fear not this tormentor, but take thy death that I may receive thee again in mercy with thy brethren." The death, also, of Eleazar, one of the principal scribes, an aged man, " who was constrained to open his mouth and to eat swine's flesh, but who, choosing to die gloriously rather than live stained with such an abomination, spit it forth, and came of his own accord to the torment," affords another " example to such as be young to die willingly and courageously for the honourable and holy laws " (2 Macc. iv.). To this may be added the untold sufferings of those heroic men who fled with the Maccabees into the mountains and supported life there " after the manner of beasts." A season of distress and anguish followed, " such as never was since there was a nation to that same time." Under the pressure of this unheard of trouble, the holy city " became strange to those that were born in her, and her own children left her " (1 Macc. i. 38). " The Jews (says Josephus) every day underwent great miseries and bitter torments ; for they were whipped with rods, and their bodies were torn to pieces, and were crucified while they were yet alive. They also strangled those women and their sons whom they had circumcised (comp. 1 Macc. i. 60, 61), as the king had appointed, hanging their sons about their necks as they were upon the crosses " (Ant. xii. 5). Indeed, " under the whole heaven had not been done as had been done upon Jerusalem." No wonder that the mournful plaint arose, " Now therefore O our God hear the prayer of thy servant and his

supplications . . . open thine eyes and behold our desolations and the city which is called by thy name " (ix. 17, 18).

VI. THE ATTEMPT OF ANTIOCHUS TO ABOLISH THE JEWISH RELIGION.

" He shall think to change times and laws " (vii. 25).

" His heart shall be against the holy covenant " (xi. 28).

" He shall have indignation against the holy covenant " (xi. 30).

" He shall have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant " (xi. 30).

" Such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries " (xi. 32).

In his attempt to exterminate the Jewish religion, to call the temple that of Jupiter Olympius and to compel the Jews to adopt the religious worship of the heathen, Antiochus differs (" he shall be diverse from the first ") from other Gentile princes whose history has been interwoven with that of the holy people. So far from being desirous of abolishing the worship of Jehovah, they appear to have been anxious to retain the religious offices of the Jews. Nebuchadnezzar respected the prophetic character of Jeremiah (Jer. xxxix. 11): Cyrus is distinguished as the " anointed " (Isa. xlv. 1) restorer of the temple: Darius " sent unto the house of God Sherezar and Regem-melech, and their men, to pray before the Lord " (Zech. vii. 2); and commanded the Jews to " offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven and to pray for the life of the king and his sons " (Ezra vi. 10): " Seleucus (Philopator) king of Asia, of his own revenues, bare all the costs belonging to the service of the sacrifices " (2 Macc. iii. 3). But Antiochus, the staunch enemy of Judaism, aimed at the complete extinction of the existing worship; " King Antiochus wrote to his whole kingdom, that all should be one people, and every one should leave his laws . . . and should follow the laws and rites of the strangers in the land (*margin*); and forbid burnt-offerings, and sacrifice, and drink-offerings in the temple, and that they should profane

the sabbaths and festival days, and pollute the sanctuary and holy people, set up altars, and groves, and chapels of idols, and sacrifice swine's flesh, and unclean beasts: that they should also leave their children uncircumcised, and make their souls abominable with all manner of uncleanness and profanation, to the end they might forget the law, and change all the ordinances, and whosoever would not do according to the commandment of the king he should die" (1 Macc. i. 41-50). Similarly Josephus says: "He compelled them to forsake the worship which they paid to their own God, and to adore those whom he took to be gods, and made them build temples, and raise idol-altars in every city and village." (Ant. xii. 5.)

VII. THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION SET UP BY ANTIOCHUS.

"By him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down; and an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression" (viii. 11, 12).

"The people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, . . . and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" (ix. 26, 27).

"And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate" (xi. 31).

"From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days" (xii. 11).

Of all historical facts, that recorded in the passages above cited is one of the most indubitable; the time of its perpetration, as well as that of its duration, being noted with minute precision. "Now, the fifteenth day of the month Casleu, in the hundred forty and fifth year, they set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar, and builded idol-altars throughout the cities of Juda on every side . . . Now the five and twentieth day of the month they did sacrifice upon the idol-altar which was upon the altar of God" (1 Macc. i. 54-59). Josephus adds: "And when the king had built an idol-altar

upon God's altar, he slew swine upon it, and so offered a sacrifice neither according to the law nor the Jewish religious worship in that city." (Ant. xii. 5.) The wanton character of this insult was inexcusable. It left its mark deeply impressed upon the national mind. Bishop Newton, in his anxiety to interpret the "little horn" of Antichrist, has spoken slightly of the calamities suffered under Antiochus, and has thought them in no way to be compared to those endured under Nebuchadnezzar. But the Babylonian Captivity, terrible as it was, did not wound the national spirit so acutely as the shorter yet more malignant persecution of Antiochus. The Jew, always enthusiastic and impulsive, displayed on the subject of religion a fanaticism akin to frenzy, and the degradation heaped upon the altar of Jehovah sank deeply into the heart of all the race. Hence the historical prominence given to the treasured wrong. Hence the irrepressible indignation at the gratuitous insult as well as the triumphant pæan at the excision of the oppressor. It ceases, therefore, to be an object of wonder that the deliverance of the holy people from such intolerable indignities should have supplied a theme congenial to the exalted state of the national mind, which found suitable expression in the noble plainness of Maccabean history, and in the mysterious yet not less significant symbolism of Daniel.

VIII. THE MISERABLE END OF ANTIOCHUS.

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down (*donec sellæ collocatæ sunt*), and the Ancient of days did sit, . . . the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame" (vii. 9-11).

"The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion to consume, and to destroy it unto the end" (vii. 26).

"He shall be broken without hand" (*B'eyphes yad ishavër*,—in want of hand to help him he shall be broken, viii. 25).

"Messiah shall be cut off, and there is not (a helper) to him"—*ve ayin (hozër) lo.* (ix. 26).

"His end shall be with a flood" (ix. 26).

"That determined shall be poured upon the desolate"—*desolator*, margin—(ix. 27).

"He shall come to his end, and none shall help him,"—*ve ayn hozër lo*—and there is not a helper to him (xi. 45).

It is noticeable that the destruction of Antiochus is attributed in the Book of Daniel to the divine judgment; not meaning by this phrase, the judgment of the last great day, but the judgment of God against Antiochus Epiphanes "because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake." In the sublime picture of chap. vii. 9, 10, the Ancient of Days seated on his wheeled throne, and surrounded by myriads of angels, executes just retribution upon the sacrilegious tyrant. In the symbolic language of the prophet, "the beast is slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." This "just punishment for his pride" (2 Macc. vii. 36) is largely noticed by contemporaneous and subsequent writers. "The Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, smote him with an incurable and invisible plague . . . and thus he that a little afore thought he might command the waves of the sea (so proud was he beyond the condition of man), and weigh the high mountains in a balance, was now cast on the ground and carried in an horse-litter, showing forth unto all the manifest power of God: so that the worms (comp. Acts xii. 23) rose up out of the body of this wicked man, and whiles he lived in sorrow and pain his flesh fell away, and the filthiness of his smell was noisome to all his army" (2 Macc. ix. 5-9).

Stricken down by an irresistible hand, the oppressor acknowledges his guilt, and repents of his enormities. "It is meet (he says) to be subject unto God, and that a man that is mortal should not proudly think of himself as if he were God. This wicked person vowed also unto the Lord, who now no more would have mercy upon him, saying thus, that the holy city (to the which he was going in haste, to lay it even with the ground, and to make it a common burying place) he would set at liberty; and as touching the Jews,

whom he had judged not worthy so much as to be buried, but to be cast out with their children to be devoured of the fowls and wild beasts, he would make them all equals to the citizens of Athens ; and the holy temple which before he had spoiled he would garnish with goodly gifts, and restore all the holy vessels with many more, and out of his own revenue defray the charges belonging to the sacrifices ; yea, and that also he would become a Jew himself and go through all the world that was inhabited and declare the power of God" (2 Macc. ix. 12-17). "He fell into a distemper (says Josephus) which, as it lasted a great while and as his pains increased upon him, so he at length perceived he should die in a little time. So he called his friends to him and told them that his distemper was severe upon him, and confessed withal that this calamity was sent upon him for the miseries he had brought upon the Jewish nation while he plundered¹ their temple and contemned their God" (Ant. xii. 9). His pains, however, do not cease. "He is broken without (*human*) hand." "His end (not 'the end thereof,' as in our version) shall be with a flood." "He shall come to his end and none shall help him." "Thus the murderer and blasphemer having suffered most grievously as he intreated other men, so died he a miserable death in a strange² country in the mountains" (2 Macc. ix. 28).

It would be difficult to find a fulfilment which answers with greater exactness to the symbol of "the little horn" than the one now given. Speaking of the fitness with which it squares with the history of Antiochus, a modern commentator observes : "There can be no doubt that Antiochus Epiphanes is denoted here. All the circumstances of the prediction find a fulfilment in him. And if it were supposed that this was

¹ Polybius says that Antiochus came to his miserable end because he had a purpose to plunder the temple of Diana in Persia : with the feeling natural to a Jew, Josephus ascribes the same event to his "sacrilegious plundering of the temple at Jerusalem."

² "Ἐν Τάβαις τῆς Πέρσιδος ἐζέλιπε τὸν βίον."—POLYBIUS.

written *after* he had lived, and that it was the design of the writer to describe him by this symbol, he could not have found a symbol that would have been more striking or more appropriate than this" (Barnes on Daniel viii.). To this it may be added, that Josephus appears to have been aware of no other interpretation. He distinctly asserts that "the lesser horn" (Antiochus) arose out of the four horns of Alexander's divided empire ; that it "waxed great," and that "God showed to him (Daniel) that it should fight against his nation and take their city by force, and bring the temple worship to confusion, and forbid the sacrifices to be offered for one thousand two hundred and ninety-six days . . . that from among them (the four horns) there should arise a certain king that should overcome our nation and laws, and should take away the political government, and should spoil the temple, and forbid the sacrifices to be offered for three years. Accordingly it happened that our nation suffered these things under Antiochus Epiphanes" (Ant. x. 11). Interpreted by the aid of contemporaneous and subsequent history, the symbol of the little horn would seem to be capable of a natural and intelligible solution ; explained as it sometimes is of an imaginary Antichrist of present or yet future times, it becomes obscure, contradictory, and misleading, involving palpable absurdities and encouraging fanaticism and error.

CHAPTER V.

JUDAS MACCABEUS.

IT was not to be expected that an impatient people like the Jews would long submit to insults of such a nature as those heaped upon them by Antiochus. The flame of insubordination soon burst forth, and Mattathias, a priest of the order of Joarib, indignant at the abominations committed in Judah and Jerusalem, having first slain the king's officer who compelled the Israelites to sacrifice in his own village of Modin, betook himself, like David of old, to the wilderness at the head of a small band of patriots. "If any one (he said) be zealous for the laws of his country and for the worship of his God, let him follow me" (Ant. xii. 6). "So he and his sons fled into the mountains (or the wilderness as it is presently called) to dwell there" (1 Macc. ii. 28, 29), for the sake of the protection afforded by the desert fastnesses. What these heroic men suffered for conscience' sake in the secret places of their desolate sojourn, as they "wandered in deserts and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth," and to what extent they carried their zeal for the law, when, being attacked by the forces of Antiochus on the Sabbath, they, to the number of a thousand, preferred to perish in the caves where they lay hid, rather than break the commandment by offering resistance on that holy day, may be learnt from 1 Macc. ii. History nowhere supplies a record of more disinterested zeal or more dignified endurance than that evinced by the small yet "noble army of martyrs," who were "purified and made white and tried" in that time of unparalleled trouble.

After braving the authority of the tyrant for a year, and "living in the mountains after the manner of beasts," Mattathias, who seems to have been already advanced in years

when the insurrection was made, fell a victim to the hardships consequent upon such a manner of life, and was buried in the sepulchre of his fathers at Modin, charging his sons with his latest breath to "give their lives for the covenant of their fathers," and reminding them by the examples of Joseph, Daniel, and the three holy children, that "throughout all ages none that put their trust in him shall be overcome." The sagacity of this prudent and zealous leader is not inaptly shown in the choice made by him of those amongst his sons who he desired should fill his place. "I know (he said) that your brother Simon is a man of counsel, give ear unto him alway, he shall be a father unto you : as for Judas Maccabeus he hath been mighty and strong even from his youth up, let him be your captain and fight the battle of the people" (1 Macc. ii. 65, 66). "Judas then (says Josephus) took upon him the administration of public affairs in the 146th year (of the Seleucidæ) ; and by the ready assistance of his brethren and of others cast their enemies out of the country, put those of their own country to death who had transgressed its laws, and purified the land of all the pollutions that were in it" (Ant. xii. 6).

The Maccabean leader began the work of national deliverance by collecting around him such of his countrymen as remained faithful to the law amidst the circumstances of trial in which they were placed. He soon found himself at the head of a small band of desperate men, "and all his brethren helped him, and so did all they that held with his father, and they fought with cheerfulness the battle of Israel" (1 Macc. iii. 2). His first success was obtained over Apollonius the governor of Samaria, the "chief collector of tribute" (1 Macc. i. 29), and a bitter enemy of the Jews; the Samaritans claiming to be Sidonians and not Jews (Ant. xii. 5), and freely adopting the Greek customs imposed by Antiochus. In this engagement Apollonius was defeated and slain, and his sword retained by the conqueror as a trophy of victory. Seron, general of the army of Cœle-Syria was the next opponent.

He experienced a still more disgraceful defeat than the former; his great multitude being utterly routed in "the going down of Bethhoron" (1 Macc. iii. 24) by the small yet determined band of patriots: Judas, like another Asa (2 Chron. xiv. 11), encouraging his soldiers with the words, "It is no hard matter for many to be shut up in the hands of a few; and with the God of heaven it is all one to deliver with a great multitude or a small company" (1 Macc. iii. 18). Encouraged by success, the troops of Judas encounter subsequently the whole power of Syria under Gorgias ("that cursed man": 2 Macc. xii. 35), and Nicanor, their heathen adversaries amounting to the number of 40,000 foot and 7,000 horse; and so confident are the latter of annihilating the insignificant band opposed to them that they are accompanied by "merchants to buy those that should be carried captives; having bonds with them to bind those that should be made prisoners, and silver and gold with which they were to pay for their price" (Ant. xii. 7). The patriots, putting their trust in God, resolve to conquer or perish, "for it is better for us (they said) to die in battle than to behold the calamities of our people and our sanctuary; nevertheless as the will of God is in heaven, so let Him do" (1 Macc. iii. 59, 60). Opposing stratagem by counter-stratagem, Judas seizes and burns the camp of the enemy, plunders it of its treasures, and returns laden with spoil and singing hymns¹ of praise. "This victory

¹ It has been supposed that several of the later Psalms are of a Maccabean date. Amongst these we may select Psalm lxxiv., descriptive of the destruction of the sanctuary by Antiochus Epiphanes, the enemies of God breaking down the carved work thereof with axes and hammers, casting fire into the sanctuary, and defiling the dwelling place of His name to the ground; no prophet arising any more to say how long this desolation should last, corresponding with the statement made by the writer of 1 Maccabees, that the followers of Judas laid up the stones of the ruined temple in a convenient place, "until there should come a prophet to show what should be done with them"; Antiochus himself being designated by the *sobriquet* of *epimanes*, or "the foolish man," who reproaches God daily. Similarly, the opening verses of Psalm lxxix. are found in 1 Macc. vii. 17, and the subject, as Theophylact long ago observed, is "the cruelty of Antiochus Epiphanes towards the Jews."

(says Josephus) greatly contributed to the recovery of their liberty." The next year Lysias, the viceroy of Syria, confounded at the defeat at Emmaus of the troops which he had sent under Gorgias and Nicanor, and determined to subdue the rebellious Jews, assembled, at Bethsura, a still larger army of 60,000 chosen foot and 5,000 horse which he commanded in person. The Maccabee, as he is often called, meets this overwhelming force with only 10,000 men, unhesitatingly attacks them, and the rest perceiving the desperate character of their adversaries retreat to Antioch. "Lysias (says our historian) observing the great spirit of the Jews, how they were prepared to die rather than lose their liberty, and being afraid of their desperate way of fighting as if it were real strength, took the rest of the army back with him, and returned to Antioch, where he enlisted foreigners into the service and prepared to fall upon Judea with a greater army" (Ant. xii. 1).

Having, by these splendid victories over the lieutenants of Antiochus, delivered Judea from the presence of hostile invaders, the pious Maccabee resolves to "go up to Jerusalem to purify the temple and offer the appointed sacrifices." The deserted state of the temple, with its gates burnt down and plants growing in it of their own accord, forced tears from his rugged soldiers. The work of restoration speedily commenced. The idol-altar was thrown down, the sanctuary cleansed, the holy vessels replaced, and "sacrifice offered according to the law upon the new altar of burnt offering which they had made." "Now it happened that these things were done on the very same day on which their divine worship had fallen off"; or as it is elsewhere stated, "Look at what time and what day the heathen had profaned it, even in that was it dedicated with songs, and citherns, and harps and cymbals; then all the people fell upon their faces worshipping and praising the God of heaven who had given them good success" (1 Macc. iv. 54, 55).

The subsequent acts of Judas, his victories over the neigh-

bouring nations of Edom, Moab, and Ammon (comp. xi. 41 with 1 Macc. v. 3-8), who, as was frequently the case, were envious of the good fortune of the Jews and took the part of their enemies; the gradual subjugation of Judea, city after city, before Judas and Jonathan; his intrepid attempt to raise the siege of Bethsura by attacking the army of Lysias amounting to 80,000 foot, 20,000 horse, and 32 elephants, in which engagement his heroic brother Eleazar perished; his superb conquest over the armies of Nicanor, first at Capharsalama, where Nicanor was defeated with a loss of 5,000 men, and again at Adasa, where the forces of the Syrian general were completely routed and he himself slain, the head and the right hand of "that blasphemer" being cut off, and hung, the one upon the tower, the other upon a gate of the temple, called afterwards Nicanor's gate,—a final and crushing overthrow of the Syrian power in Judea of which the remembrance was kept yearly, on the thirteenth day of the month Adar; his celebrated league offensive and defensive with the Romans; his unequal conflict with the troops of Bacchides, 800 Jews against 22,000 heathen; his chivalrous determination, worthy of the days of Leonidas or Bayard, not to flee, "If our time be come let us die manfully for our brethren, and let us not stain our honour" (1 Macc. ix. 10); his heroic death upon the field of battle, and the great lamentation made for him, "How is the valiant man fallen that delivered Israel,"—these, although interesting as well as important features in the life of Judas, must be merely glanced at, as points with which the prophecy of Daniel is not principally concerned. Enough perhaps has been said to show the conspicuous part played by this greatest of Israel's champions in the defence of national and religious independence. Around no other head does the wreath of liberty entwine with more grace and honour. Around no other name does the veneration attaching to disinterested and patriotic deeds cling more firmly or more deservedly. "He had been (says Josephus) a man of valour and a great warrior, and mindful

of the commands of his father Mattathias, and had undergone all difficulties both in doing and suffering for the liberty of his countrymen. And when his character was so excellent while he was alive, he left behind him a glorious reputation and memorial by gaining freedom for his nation and delivering them from slavery under the Macedonians" (Ant. xii. 2).

THE CLEANSING OF THE SANCTUARY.

A principal achievement of the Maccabean patriots which receives notice in the Book of Daniel is the Cleansing of the Sanctuary. The impiety which led to this religious act, as well as the act itself, is distinctly asserted; and it may be interesting, as before, to compare the prophetic account with historical facts.

"I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain *saint* which spake, How long *shall be* the vision *concerning* the daily *sacrifice*, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (viii. 13, 14).

"In the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate" (ix. 27).

"Arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily *sacrifice*, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate" (xi. 31).

"From the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, *there shall be* a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed *is* he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days" (xii. 11, 12).

It will perhaps be admitted that these passages refer to a horrible desecration of the temple accompanied by the taking away of the daily sacrifice and the setting up of the "transgression of desolation," or, as it is elsewhere called, the "abomination that maketh desolate." This pollution is followed at the end of a prescribed period, which is accurately defined, by the cleansing of the holy place, and the restora-

tion of divine worship. It was the privilege of the noble Maccabee to execute this pious work. Amidst the indignities heaped upon his nation, the wanton insult offered to the temple of the living God lay heaviest at his heart. Fresh from the battle field where the viceroy of Syria had been defeated, his sword yet reeking with the blood of slaughtered enemies, he resolves to purify the altar which the heathen had defiled. "Then said Judas and his brethren, Behold our enemies are discomfited, let us go up to cleanse and repair the sanctuary. Upon this all the host assembled themselves together, and went up into mount Zion. And when they saw the sanctuary desolate, and the altar profaned, and the gates burned up, and shrubs growing in the courts as in a forest or in one of the mountains, yea, and the priests' chambers pulled down, they rent their clothes and made great lamentation, and cast ashes upon their heads, and fell down flat to the ground upon their faces, and blew an alarm with the trumpets and cried toward heaven. Then Judas appointed certain men to fight against those that were in the fortress [built by Antiochus] until he had cleansed the sanctuary ; so he chose priests of blameless conversation, such as had pleasure in the law, who cleansed the sanctuary" (1 Macc. iv. 36-43). Josephus, who appears to have kept close to the statement of the Maccabean writer, gives an almost parallel account (Ant. xii. 7) ; merely adding that "when he had carefully purged it and had brought in new vessels, the candlestick, the table of shewbread, and the altar of incense which were made of gold, he hung up the veils at the gates and added doors to them ; he also took down the altar of burnt offering and built a new one of stones that he gathered together, and not of such as are hewn with iron tools."

It would be difficult to add to the positiveness and the circumstantiality with which these writers ascribe the cleansing of the sanctuary to Judas Maccabeus; this event appearing to be not only one of the most certain but unique facts recorded in Jewish history. Josiah, it is true, purified the

temple of idolatrous worship, which had been intermixed with that of the true God, but no desolation corresponding to that effected by Antiochus had previously taken place. The Jews who returned from Babylon did not so much restore as rebuild their temple from its foundations. Pompey went into the temple and saw what was unlawful for him to see, but no cleansing followed this desecration. Titus entered into the holy house as it was wrapped in flames previous to its final and irremediable desolation, but no re-consecration succeeded the impiety of the Roman general. The profanation and subsequent purification of the temple, within the limits of the period assigned by Daniel, find their accomplishment only in the desolation of Antiochus and the cleansing of the sanctuary by Judas. No other event harmonizes with the features or meets the necessities of the case. To this must be added the corroborating circumstance, that this pious restoration was commemorated by a feast which lasted eight days, the observance of which was handed down to the time of Christ. This was in all probability "the feast of Dedication," at which our Lord was present; the time of its celebration, in the middle of December, agreeing with the statement of the evangelist "and it was winter" (John x. 22). "Thus was there very great gladness among the people for that the reproach of the heathen was put away; moreover Judas and his brethren, with the whole congregation of Israel, ordained that the days of the dedication of the altar should be kept in their season from year to year by the space of eight days, from the five and twentieth day of the month Casleu, with mirth and gladness" (1 Macc. iv. 58, 59).

The cleansing of the sanctuary appears to have been followed by the death of Antiochus, the two events being nearly contemporaneous; a fact asserted in the prophecy itself (ix. 27), as well as abundantly confirmed by the Maccabean historians who connect his sudden and inglorious end with the disastrous intelligence brought to him into Persia of the successful revolt of the Jews. The decease of the tyrant was

shortly followed by that of the Maccabean hero, who fell in an unequal conflict with the overwhelming forces of Bacchides (1 Macc. ix. 18). A great political change had taken place in the meantime in the circumstances of the Jewish people. They had passed from an ignominious serfdom to comparative liberty, and this ascendancy was maintained through a long and splendid line of Asmonean kings. Within a few years of the death of Judas, the Jews ceased to pay tribute to the kings of Syria, and erected themselves into an independent nation. After five hundred years of Babylonian, Median, Medo-Persian, and Macedonian vassalage, their rulers once more proceeded from themselves and their governors from the midst of them, whilst their territorial¹ acquisition equalled, if not exceeded, those of the most exalted period of Jewish dominion.

Simon and Jonathan, the brothers of Judas, nobly seconding the efforts for independence which he had begun, succeeded in completely rescuing Judea from the Syrian yoke. The former of these, "the benefactor and ethnarch of the Jews," withheld from the Syrians their accustomed tribute, and "on the first year of his high priesthood set his people free from their slavery under the Macedonians, and permitted them to pay tribute to them no longer" (Ant. xiii. 6). Simon was followed by his son Hyrcanus, who "revolted from the Macedonians, nor did he any longer pay them the least regard either as their subject or their friend" (Ant. xiii. 10). Aristobulus the son of Hyrcanus, "intending to change the govern-

¹ "The Jews (in the reign of Alexander Jannæus) were in possession of the following cities that had belonged to the Syrians, Idumeans, and Phenicians. At the sea side—Strato's tower, Appollonia, Joppa, Jamnia, Ashdod, Gaza, Anthedon, Raphia, and Rhinocolura. In the middle of the country, near to Idumea—Adera, and Marissa; near the country of Samaria—Mount Carmel, and Mount Tabor, Scythopolis, and Gadara; of the country of Gaulonitis—Seleucia, and Gabala; in the country of Moab—Hesbon, and Medeba, Lemba, and Nonas, Gelithon, Zara, the valley of the Cilices, and Pella. . . . The Jews also possessed cities of Syria which had been destroyed" (Ant. xiii. 15).

ment into a kingdom, first of all put a diadem¹ upon his head " (Ant. xiii. 11). To Aristobulus succeeded Alexander Jan-næus, whose queen Alexandra held the government after his death till her decease at the age of seventy-three. She left two sons, Hyrcanus II. and Aristobulus II. These, disputing for mastery at Jerusalem, appealed to the all-powerful Romans. Pompey, at that time at Damascus, favoured by the party of Hyrcanus, easily took the city of Jerusalem, and Judea became a Roman province. It may be also worthy of notice that the restored kingdom of Israel did not end with the extinction of the Asmonean line, who are again succeeded by the Idumean family who, although aliens by race, were Jews in religion. A princely line of Herodian kings, appointed, it is true, by the Romans, yet exercising independent sovereignty, directed Jewish affairs from the accession of Antipater to the days of Agrippa II., the last of the Herods, who took the part of the Romans at the destruction of Jerusalem.

The war of liberation, as it has been called, resulting in the complete independence of the holy people, is a proud epoch in Jewish history, and worthy to be compared with the most disinterested efforts witnessed by any age or country in behalf of civil and religious freedom. If ever there was a time in the annals of Jewish story in which "the people that do know their God should do exploits," it is that with which we are now concerned. The chronicles of that period abound with deeds of such romantic valour, that but for the well-known veracity of the author of 1 Maccabees, they would appear to be well-nigh fabulous. It is recorded that all the five sons of Mattathias perished in behalf of the cause they had espoused. First, Judas fell at a "Jewish Thermopylæ." Within a few days his brother John was "slain by the party of Antiochus" (Bell. Jud. i. 1). Eleazar had previously thrown away his life

¹ At that time, the Greeks being feeble, the Parthians not as yet come, and the Romans at a distance, the Jews appointed kings over themselves. —TAC. *Hist.* v. 8.

in the same contest. Jonathan was put to death by the treachery of Tryphon, the guardian of Antiochus Eupator. And last of all, Simon fell a victim to domestic treason. Of the self-devotion of one of these worthy sons of a worthy sire, Jewish history, with pardonable pride, has left a memorable record. Before the battle joined in one of those mountain passes where the patriots, inferior in number to their overwhelming foes, were wont to assail their enemies to advantage, "Eleazar, the brother of Judas, seeing the highest of the elephants adorned with a large tower and with military trappings of gold, and supposing that Antiochus himself was upon him, ran a great way before his own army, and cutting his way through the enemy's troops, got up to the elephant. Yet he could not reach him who seemed to be the king by reason of his being so high; but ran his weapon into the belly of the beast, and brought him down upon himself, and was crushed to death, having done no more than attempted great things and showed that he preferred glory above life" (Bell. Jud. i. 1). Heroism like this, rash as it may seem, could not fail of its effect, and the war cry of the Maccabee became another word for victory.

But it is chiefly around the exploits of the third son of Mattathias that the visions of Daniel love to revolve. It is questionable whether the whole range of sacred history presents a more illustrious character than that of Judas. "Among those lofty spirits who have asserted the liberty of their native land against wanton and cruel oppression, none have surpassed the most able of the Maccabees in accomplishing a great end with inadequate means; none ever united more glorious valour with a better cause." Reared in the sharp school of adversity, with a mind disciplined by trials of no ordinary kind, he proved himself equal to the emergencies of his situation, and fulfilled the task of bringing back his nation to the worship of Jehovah. The implicit faith which he appears to have had in his mission communicated itself to his followers, and carried him successfully through difficulties

which would have effectually deterred others. It became impossible to withstand men who were animated by prophetically inspired hopes of victory and resolved to do or die.¹ Opposed by the overwhelming numbers of Scron, he reminds his fainting soldiers that "with *the God* of heaven it is all one to deliver with a great multitude or a small company." Encompassed by the host of Gorgias, like another Moses, he cries unto heaven, if peradventure the Lord will "destroy this host before our face this day." Placed in situations of unparalleled distress, and forced to accept unequal conflict, still with the prowess with which his name² is associated, he confronts the foe, and with holy confidence shouts his battle cry, "The Lord is our help." Faithful in public and private life, dignified in adversity, subdued in prosperity, with a zeal for religion unequalled, and a patriotism untarnished by a single stain, he has handed down to posterity a name conspicuous among the great and good; the remembrance of which still surrounds Israel with a halo of the past, and illumines degenerate days with a glory caught from the deeds of old. His conduct, however, needs no human praise. It is indelibly inscribed in truthful words

¹ An additional incentive to desperate valour appears to have been supplied, as in the case of the troops of Mahomet, by the newly-conceived hope of an immediate resurrection. This appears to have been the special privilege of those slain in battle. Judas, we are told, "in that he was mindful of the resurrection," offers a sin-offering of two thousand drachms of silver for some idolatrous soldiers upon whose bodies were found things consecrated to the idols of the Jamnites: "for if he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead; and also in that he perceived that there was *great favour for those that died godly*; it was an holy and good thought. Whereupon he made a reconciliation for the dead, that they might be delivered from sin" (2 Macc. xii. 44, 45).

² The word *Maccabi* has an uncertain derivation—some have supposed it to be formed of the initial letters of the Hebrew sentence, *Mi camoka Baëlim Yehovah*, Who is like unto Thee among the gods, O Jehovah (Exod. xv. 11). According to others it is formed from *Maccab*, a hammer, a personal appellation of Judas, derived perhaps from the use of his favourite weapon, like that of Charles Martel the hero of the Franks.

of sacred story for which no inconsiderable portion of the Church Catholic claims inspiration equal to that accorded to the canonical Scriptures. "So he gat his people great honour and put on a breast-plate as a giant, and girt his warlike harness about him, and he made battles, protecting the host with his sword. In his acts he was like a lion, and like a lion's whelp roaring for his prey. For he pursued the wicked and sought them out, and burnt up those that vexed his people. Wherefore the wicked shrunk for fear of him, and all the workers of iniquity were troubled because salvation prospered in his hand. He grieved also many kings, and made Jacob glad with his acts, and his memorial is blessed for ever" (1 Macc. iii. 3-7).

CHAPTER VI.

TRANSLATION (DAN. ix. 23-27).

At the beginning of thy supplications the word went forth, and I am come to announce it since thou art a man of desires (or loves), that thou mayest understand the word, and comprehend the vision. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to accomplish the transgression, and to finish sins, and to cover iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophet, and to anoint a Holy of holies. Know thou therefore and understand, from the going forth of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem to an anointed one, a prince (*shall be*) seven weeks: and threescore and two weeks it shall be built again, street and wall, and in strait of times. And after the threescore and two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off, and there is not (*a helper*) to him. And the people of the prince that shall come (*the coming one*) shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and his end shall be in the flood, and unto the end (*shall be*) war, desolations decreed. And he shall make firm a covenant with many, one week; and half of the week shall cause sacrifice and oblation to cease; and over the wing of abominations (*shall be*) that which maketh desolate even to the consummation and the destruction determined poured out on the desolator.

THE SEVENTY WEEKS.

IT has been usual to explain this arithmetical enigma, which has baffled the calculations of interpreters from the days of Jerome to the present time, of events which took place during, or not remotely subsequent to, the ministry of Jesus Christ. With this view, the Seventy Weeks have been dated from the commission of Ezra, B.C. 457, and made to end with the death of Jesus, A.D. 33: "Messiah cut off, but not for himself," has been explained, contrary to the grammatical sense of the original, of the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus: the destruction of the city and people which follows that excision, of the desolation of Jerusalem by Titus: the cessation of the sacrifice and oblation for a prescribed term of three and a half years, of the complete and final abolition of the daily sacrifice by the Romans, who destroyed the only

place in which it could be offered : the finishing of transgression, sin, and iniquity, the introduction of everlasting righteousness, and the sealing up of vision and prophecy, of spiritual mercies vouchsafed to man at the close of that seventieth week ; and the anointing of a Holy of holies, of the consecration of Jesus Christ Himself.

"All this (says Dr. Pusey, in his chapter on the Seventy Weeks) meets in one in the Gospel. He, the so long looked-for, came : He was owned as the Messiah : He *did* cause the sacrifices of the law to cease : He *was* cut off : yet He *did* make the covenant with the many : a foreign army *did* desolate city and temple ; the temple for these 1800 years has lain desolate."

The prophecy, however, refuses to be thus coerced, and presents serious obstacles in the way of traditional theology. On the supposition that Daniel wrote in Babylon before the end of that long captivity, it is incredible that he should have passed over the decree of Cyrus, B.C. 536, then imminent, and should have preferred the commission of Ezra, B.C. 457, at a more remote period. The scope, moreover, of the prophetic horizon does not admit of the introduction of a catastrophe inflicted by the Romans into visions descriptive of Syrian calamities ; nor does exegetical consistency permit the clause, *Ve ayn lo*, "and there is not to him," to acquire a sense of vicarious substitution foreign to its meaning.¹ Besides, it "Messiah cut off" is Jesus Christ, a longer space than "one week," or seven years, is required for the interval between His death and the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus ; and it would also be difficult to prove that the cessation of the daily sacrifice, at the time of the Roman invasion of Judea, was confined to the space of three and a half years. To the

¹ It is only fair to apprise the reader that the notion of vicarious sacrifice, once supposed to exist in this passage, is at last given up ; the ellipsis (says Dr. Pusey) must now be supplied from the context, and the phrase be rendered, "there is not (a people, or city, or sanctuary) to him."

assertion that a "Holy of holies" is identical with an "All holy," and may therefore be explained of Jesus Christ, it is a sufficient answer to say that the expression, *Kodesh Kadoshim*, Holy of holies, is not used of persons but of things, and that the altar, when anointed, becomes a Holy of holies (Exod. xl. 10). The application therefore of Messianic exegesis to this passage becomes at once isolated and anachronous. The preceding and following chapters are concerned with the delineation of events prior to the reign and ending with the death of Antiochus Epiphanes: the elimination therefore of the intermediate vision of the "Seventy Weeks" from the horizon occupied by the rest disturbs the unity of the piece, and carries the prophecy beyond the limits by which the other visions of the book are bounded.

But whilst insurmountable exegetical difficulties impede, if they do not entirely subvert, the traditional theory, on the other hand there is an approach to agreement among the modern school of interpreters on the subject of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel. It is now thought that these cannot be separated from other eschatological periods in the same book, which have their consummation at the Maccabean era. To that period therefore we shall look as more likely to supply events which shall meet the requirements of the prophecy; and in so doing we shall follow the example of Dr. Arnold, who has observed: "I have long thought that the greater part of the Book of Daniel is most certainly a very late work of the time of the Maccabees, and the pretended prophecy of the kings of Greece and Persia, and of the North and South, mere history, like the poetical prophecies in Virgil and elsewhere." It may perhaps be urged that the view here taken of the Book of Daniel is "as old as Porphyry"; and if by this it is meant that an argument is worthless because it is no longer new, we fully admit the charge. Happily we have now learned to turn this cavil against those who use it, and to infer from the re-appearing from time to time of an objection which has never been properly answered, a proof of

vitality rather than of decay. Granted that the theory of a Maccabean date is as old as the era of that ancient opponent of traditional Christianity, it is not on that account less worthy of attention, for he was no mean judge of Danielic questions. Even Jerome, speaking of his critical faculties, is bold enough to say: "There now remain few original histories of the Seleucidæ; but Porphyry, having consulted nine, was well qualified to decide what parts of Daniel had been already fulfilled."

1. Before addressing ourselves to the task of elucidating this abstruse problem, we would premise that the "Seventy Weeks" are weeks of years, in contradistinction to weeks of days (Dan. x. 2, 3); such a conception being familiar to the sacred writers, as, for instance, "Thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years" (Lev. xxv. 8). This receives support from the consideration that the period symbolised by the half of the week (Dan. ix. 27) corresponds with its equivalents, "a time, and times, and the dividing of time" (Dan. vii. 25), "a time, times, and an half" (Dan. xii. 7), or three and a half years, a period significant of a season of disaster and distress (Luke iv. 25; James v. 17).

2. It may also be useful to premise that symbolic arithmetic, especially when based on the number "seven,"¹ invests prophetic epochs with an indefinite character, and does not permit them to be interpreted with mathematical precision. It would seem difficult, if not impossible, to express the duration of historical events by heptads with numerical exactness, an approach to complete accuracy being all that can be

¹ The idea of perfection belonging to the sacred number "seven" may be seen in the seven heavens described in the Ascension of Isaiah; the seventh and highest being the dwelling place of Jehovah Himself. Similar treatment of this number, expressive of completeness, is observable in the Apocalypse, where the churches, seals, trumpets, vials, angels, spirits, mountains, heads of the beast, and horns and eyes of the lamb, are denoted by sevens.

expected from such a mode of computation. Considerable latitude should, therefore, be conceded to the exegesis of the arithmetical puzzle of the Seventy Weeks ; due regard being had to the harmony sustained between the perfect number "seven weeks," and the equally perfect number "seventy weeks," expressed still more clearly in the original by *shavvuhim shiveah* and *shavvuhim shivchim*.

3. It may also be observed that the visions of Daniel are repeated under a variety of symbolic dress, as the symbol of the Four Great Beasts is a reiteration of that of the Four Metallic Kingdoms. The vision therefore of the Seventy Weeks should be interpreted in connection with other visions which precede and follow it. The preceding vision of chapter viii. makes mention of a "little horn" who should cast down the sanctuary, take away the daily sacrifice, and set up the abomination of desolation for 2,300 (evening morning = 1,150) days. In the vision (chapter xi.) which follows that of the Seventy Weeks, the "vile person" (Antiochus) again pollutes the sanctuary of strength, takes away the daily sacrifice, and places the abomination that maketh desolate. The intermediate vision of the Seventy Weeks makes mention of a prince that shall come, whose people should destroy the city and the sanctuary, and cause sacrifice and oblation to cease for the midst (half) of the week, *i.e.* for three years and a half. A brief examination of the respective visions will make it evident that they demand similar exegetical treatment, and at the same time difficult to believe that the former and the latter set forth the atrocities of the Syrian tyrant, and the intermediate vision, which is occupied with the same events, the occurrences of the Christian period.

4. Again : the visions of Daniel end respectively with the irremediable and divinely-inflicted punishment upon Antiochus. Not to speak of the Great Metallic Image of chapter ii., whose Babylonian, Median, Medo-Persian, Macedonian, and Syro-Egyptian kingdoms (and amongst them that of Antio-

thus) fall before the "stone cut out of the mountain without (*human*) hand"—the second, the Four Great Beasts of chapter vii., corresponding with the Great Image, records the judgment of God upon the "Little Horn," who is "slain, and his body given to the burning flame" (vii. 11). The third, of chapter viii., starting from Alexander and his four notable successors, and omitting the Ten Horns¹ mentioned in the previous chapter, continues the history until the same Little Horn is "broken without (*human*) hand" (viii. 25). The fourth, of chapter ix., wears a chronological aspect, and by computing seventy weeks of years from the prophecy of Jeremiah (B.C. 606) to the respective restorations of Jerusalem by Cyrus and Judas Maccabeus, brings down the calculation to the excision of the tyrant who is "cut off, and there is not (*a helper*) to him" (ix. 27). The fifth, of chapter xi., after giving an historical summary of the kings who preceded Antiochus from the time of Alexander, subjoins a minute and detailed account of the oppressor until his miserable death: "He shall come to his end, and there is not a helper to him" (xi. 45). With the arrival of that event, which is effected by the irresistible power of the Almighty, the book comes to a sudden close—a conclusive proof of its Maccabean date and authorship. And not only do these visions terminate with his death, but they reiterate the principal incidents of his career. The persecution of the Jewish people appears in chapters vii., viii., ix., xi., xii.; the setting up of the abomination of desolation in viii., ix., xi., xii.; the visits of Gabriel and other angels in viii., ix., x., xi., xii.; making it evident that the respective chapters treat of the same events. It is therefore impossible to eliminate the Seventy Weeks from other visions of the book, and

¹ The use of ellipsis is common in the Book of Daniel. Not only are the ten horns omitted (viii. 23), although their position is indicated by the "*latter time*" of the kingdom of the four notable ones, but the writer passes at once from Alexander to the ten Syro-Egyptian horns without special mention of the four notable ones (xi. 4). The destruction of Antiochus is described as "without hand," and "there is not to him," in both of which passages an ellipsis has to be supplied.

to apply it to the times of the Messiah, an application not sanctioned by Jesus and His apostles, who, with their perfect knowledge of the Book of Daniel, could not have overlooked the passage, had they perceived in it a reference to Messiah.

5. This celebrated prophecy is moreover given in the form of an arithmetical enigma whose solution demands both "skill and understanding." Its point would seem to be that the "seven weeks," or seven years, should be answered by an analogous period of "seventy weeks," or seven times seventy years. The seventy years of Jeremiah's prophecy had not been followed by a Messianic kingdom, and "disappointed hope taking hold of a new period" had extended the seventy years into seventy weeks of years, which are "divided" into two distinct epochs of seven weeks, and of sixty-two weeks. It will be observed that each of these periods is bounded by the introduction of a Messiah, a prince; the features by which these are described requiring application to separate individuals: for whilst the first is spoken of in terms of highest dignity as "Messiah the prince," the second is ignominiously designated "Messiah cut off." It will also be noticed that the period of their respective appearing is connected with a restoration of the holy city. At the end of the "seven weeks" Messiah the prince "restores and builds" Jerusalem; and at the end of the "sixty-two weeks" the "street (of Jerusalem) shall be built again (*Iterum reedificabitur*, Ges.) and the wall even in troublous times." The starting-point from which these periods are to be reckoned is "from the going forth of the commandment" ¹ (*davar*, word) to restore and to build Jerusalem"; and by a reference to Daniel ix. 2, that word is said to be the prophecy of Jeremiah at the beginning of the Captivity. And in calculating these periods it is evident that

¹ In Daniel ix. 23 the word *davar* occurs twice, where it must be understood of the communication made to Daniel by the angel Gabriel. The same word translated "commandment" is met with in ver. 25, and is explained (but upon what principle we are unable to say) of the edict of a Persian monarch.

consecutive computation of the seven and the sixty-two weeks is not required. Had it been the intention of the writer to announce an event which should happen at the expiration of the whole term of sixty-nine weeks, there would have been no break in the heptads, and no necessity for their division¹ into the separate portions of seven and sixty-two, neither would the sixty-two weeks be parted off from the whole number as the period after which an anointed one should be cut off. These distinct and obviously disunited epochs we now proceed to examine in the order in which they occur.

THE SEVEN WEEKS.

The first period of "seven weeks," separated from "the threescore and two weeks" by numerical arrangement and by the Hebrew accent, is thought to extend from B.C. 606, the date of Jeremiah's prophecy (Dan. ix. 2) to the first year of Cyrus, B.C. 536, when in order that "the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled," the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, was stirred up to issue the edict for the return of the Jews from their long captivity in Babylon. This period, comprising a term of seventy years, is expressed by the perfect² number "seven weeks," or forty years, either

¹ This arrangement appears to be justified by the punctuation as well as by the position of *vau* copulative before *Shavuhim*. Had a connected period been intended, it would have been before *Tashuv*, and the number would have been sixty-nine, and not seven and sixty-two.—REICHEL.

² That the seven weeks, or forty-nine years, is a perfect number and therefore capable of being used for the whole period of seventy years, may be seen from the use made of this elastic number in the Song of the Three Holy Children which follows ver. 23 in the third chapter of Daniel, where "the flame streamed forth above the furnace *forty and nine cubits*" (ver. 24). In the Epistle of Jeremy the period of the captivity is "seven generations" (ver. 3). Others again have thought, and apparently with some reason, that the twenty-one years which are required to make up the seventy years of the Captivity are supplemented by the space which intervened between the first restoration of the city and temple at the edict of Cyrus, and the completion of the work (Ezra vi. 14). During this season of Samaritan opposition to the rebuilding of the temple, Daniel is

because the harmony of the seventy weeks demanded an antithesis of seven weeks, or because the writer intended to denote a season of release and jubilee. The majority of critics have interpreted *Mashiach Nagid*, an anointed prince, of Cyrus, the "anointed" of the Lord, to whom was committed the task of rebuilding the temple and the holy city (Isa. xlv. 28; xlv. 1). The exegetical harmony on this point may be said to be unbroken, no other individual seeming to fulfil the requirements of the prophecy so completely as Cyrus who combined the qualities of a Messiah and a Prince, as well as those of a restorer of the holy city and temple, in his own person.¹

THE THREESCORE AND TWO WEEKS.

A peculiarity observable in this enigmatical prophecy is the absence of a *terminus a quo*, from which to determine the commencement of the respective periods of "seven weeks" and "threescore and two weeks." The only clue suggested by the book itself from which the starting point may be inferred, is the prophecy of Jeremiah (Dan. ix. 2) at the commencement of the Babylonian Captivity (B.C. 606); and to this it may be added that the respective periods of seven and sixty-two weeks introduce a Messiah. The first term of "seven weeks" closes with the arrival of an anointed prince

represented as "mourning and remaining with the *kings* of Persia," Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes; the "three full weeks" of *days* being emblematical of the "one and twenty days" or years (Ezek. iv. 6).

¹ At this culminating epoch the holy city Jerusalem is restored by Judas Maccabeus after its desolation by Antiochus, as at the end of the "seven weeks" the holy city is rebuilt by Cyrus after its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar. This is one of the most clearly asserted facts of history. After describing the cleansing of the sanctuary by Judas and his companions, the writer of 1 Maccabees adds, "At that time also they builded up the Mount Sion with high walls and strong towers round about, lest the Gentiles should come and tread it down as they had before" (iv. 60); the times in which this partial restoration was effected being described as "troubulous," and analogous to those of the days of Nehemiah.

(Cyrus); the second term of "sixty-two weeks" also ends with the introduction of an anointed one also called a prince, who should be "cut off." It will be necessary therefore to reckon the sixty-two weeks from the same starting point as that from which the seven weeks were counted, for a prince who shall answer to the prophetic description. Now this second period comprises a term of 434 years, and this deducted from B.C. 606 gives B.C. 172, the commencement of the reign of Antiochus:¹ and if to the "sixty-two weeks," or 434 years, the "one week," or seven years, be added, a total is arrived at of sixty-three weeks, or 441 years, which deducted from B.C. 606 gives B.C. 165, the period of the cleansing of the sanctuary and also of the death of the tyrant. The arithmetical enigma of the seventy weeks may then be solved by adding to the 441 years the "seven weeks," or forty-nine years, which terminated with Cyrus, making a total of 490 years, the required number. At this consummating period the sanctuary was cleansed by Judas Maccabeus, the transgression of the holy people accomplished, their iniquity covered, everlasting righteousness brought in, the vision of Daniel sealed, and the altar reconsecrated after its pollution by Antiochus.

"After (*the*) threescore and two weeks shall (*a*) Messiah be cut off," *i.e.*, shall meet with a violent or heaven-inflicted death. This much disputed clause has been explained of Seleucus Philopator chiefly on the ground that the prince who follows is beyond doubt, Antiochus Epiphanes: the succession² (comp. Dan. xi. 20, 21; 2 Macc. iv. 7) which appears

¹ The LXX translator comes to the same conclusion but by a different road; and by adding together the seven, seventy, and sixty-two, brings the date to the year 139 of the era of the Seleucidæ, or to the second year of the reign of Antiochus. Whether therefore the periods are calculated by Hebrew or Greek methods, they culminate in the times of the Syrian tyrant.

² The phrase *Nagid ha ba*—the prince that shall come, *ὁ ἐρχόμενος*—by which Antiochus is distinguished, is not necessarily used of order of succession to "Messiah cut off," but, as in xi. 16, where the words *ha ba* are used to denote the hostile invasion of Antiochus the Great previously spoken of (xi. 13-15), simply indicates a well-known adversary.

to be indicated by the words "that shall come," appearing so evident to some critics as to induce them to supplement the elliptical phrase "and there is not to him," by "and there is not (a successor) to him," a proceeding of which the arbitrariness cannot be too strongly condemned.

The excision spoken of has also been referred to the murder of Onias, the high-priest, "slain without cause" (2 Macc. iv. 36); an interpretation which would seem to be favoured by the LXX version which renders the passage, "Chrism shall be removed, and shall not be." It is, however, doubtful how far the original readers of the Book of Daniel would have been interested in the announcement of the assassination of Seleucus Philopator at Athens, or even of the unjust murder of Onias at Antioch; and it seems to us more probable that in this, the most important of the Danielic prophecies, the writer intended to shadow forth the heaven-inflicted death of Antiochus which took place in the year following the cleansing of the sanctuary by Judas Maccabeus. "Messiah cut off," may therefore be interpreted of Antiochus Epiphanes, the term *Mashiach*, or anointed, being as applicable to the tyrant as to Cyrus the heathen, yet "anointed," prince who rebuilds the temple (Isa. xlv. 1), or to Hazael the oppressive, yet "anointed," king of Israel (1 Kings xix. 15). The language, moreover, by which his excision is described helps to support this conclusion. In terms similar to those elsewhere employed to denote the death of the tyrant, it is declared that a "Messiah shall be cut off, and there is not (*a helper*) to him," *ve ayn (hozer) lo*; or, as the same event is elsewhere repeated in the prophecy, "He shall come to his end, and none shall help him," *ve ayn hozer lo* (xi. 45), "*and there is not a helper to him.*" It may also be observed that the verb *icareth*, "shall be cut off," indicates the judgment of God upon an oppressor, and is for the most part used to describe the excision of those whom the Lord cuts off from his people. Isaiah liii. 8 uses a different word.

THE ONE WEEK.

The "one week," separated from the preceding sixty-two weeks principally with a view of showing that the half of that term is the duration of the profanation of the sanctuary, is occupied with the delineation of events which take place in the latter part of the reign of Antiochus. By the almost universal consent of expositors, "the prince that shall come" has been interpreted of the Syrian tyrant, the features of whose impious career are given with the minuteness which characterizes preceding and following visions. *His end*, however, and not that of the city and sanctuary which speedily recovered from their desolation, is in the flood; and till the end continues war, desolations decreed. The prophetic space occupied by these events is "one week," or seven years; a term which, although not equal to the whole extent of his reign, corresponds with more or less accuracy with the duration of the persecutions of Antiochus, which may be dated "from the forty-third year of the kingdom of the Seleucidæ" (Ant. xii. 5), in which year he first took possession of Jerusalem, to the 149th year, in which he died. During this term of "one week," Antiochus makes firm a (not the holy) covenant¹ with many, referring most probably to the alliance made by the king with the apostate Jews.²

¹ This defection of many of the Jews is abundantly confirmed. "Many of the Israelites consented to his religion" (1 Macc. i. 43-52), and Mattathias is required to sacrifice "as all the heathen have done, yea, *and the men of Judah also, and such as remain at Jerusalem*" (1 Macc. ii. 18); the greater number forsaking the religion of their fathers, and availing themselves of the regal "licence to do after the ordinances of the heathen" (1 Macc. i. 13).

² It has been asserted that the word *Berith*—covenant—found seven times in the Book of Daniel, is only used of the covenant between God and his people. But to this it may be answered that in this passage, as in xi. 22, the article is omitted; the remaining five either having the article, as ix. 4; the qualifying adjective, "holy," (xi. 28-30) twice repeated; or being found in construction, which leaves no doubt of the meaning, as *Marshiäi Verith*, "such as do wickedly against the covenant." In a passage found 1 Macc. i. 11-15, according to Jerome originally written in

THE HALF OF THE WEEK.

This extraordinary subdivision, separated from the "one week" by the Hebrew accent, denotes that memorable epoch in the annals of the holy people which witnessed a cessation of the daily sacrifice for three, or three and a half years; an event without parallel in Jewish history, and which can only be explained with fairness of the profanation of the temple by Antiochus. The identity of this period with other correlative periods (*e.g.* vii. 25; xii. 7, 11, 12) is too obvious to require comment. We shall therefore dismiss as unworthy of notice the objections which have been urged against this interpretation, in the assured conviction that if the passage is not explained of the cessation of the daily sacrifice caused by the Syrian oppressor, it can never be explained at all. It will be seen that, as in preceding and following visions, these impieties tread on the heels of the consummation, and introduce the destruction of the perpetrator. As "the king of fierce countenance" who destroys the holy people is "broken without (helping) hand"; as "the vile person," who goes forth with fury to destroy and utterly to make away many, "comes to his end and none shall help him"; so this last crowning act of desolation, intercepting for three and a half years the religious worship of the most devoted ritualists of whom history makes mention, brings down the heaven-inflicted punishment upon the desolator.

Such is the result at which we arrive from a consideration of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel—this much controverted period equally with other periods¹ mentioned in the book,

Hebrew and also expressive of the agreement entered into with the heathen by the Jews, the word *διαθήκη* is used twice in the same context, and each time in a different sense. "In those days went there out of Israel wicked men who persuaded many, saying, Let us go and make a *covenant* with the heathen that are round about us . . . ; so they made themselves uncircumcised, and forsook *the holy covenant*:" the covenant made with the heathen being contrasted with the holy covenant.

¹ A peculiarity in the periods announced by Daniel is, that they differ

terminating in the crisis to which the prophecy uniformly points, and beyond which it does not appear to extend. Nay, more ; by confining these visions, as we are compelled to do, within the limits of the past, we desire to exhaust the source from whence the predictive element is chiefly derived, to take away the occupation of would-be prophets, to deprive spiritual charlatans of the means of perpetuating ignorance and uncharitableness, and to place, if God shall will, the interpretation of these mysterious volumes upon a basis that shall stand.

from each other in duration, these differences being marked, not by long spaces of time, but by the excess or diminution of a few days. Similar discrepancy is observable in Josephus ; the duration of the desolations of Antiochus not being accurately determined either by the prophet or the historian : yet no one calls in question the veracity of the latter because of these trifling discrepancies, or supposes these dissimilar periods to relate to any other events than the desolations of Antiochus. It is probable that this variation arises from the fact that two events are contemplated by each—the duration of the capture of the city, and that of the desolation of the temple ; and when it is borne in mind that the city was captured and the holy rites forbidden more than six months before the abomination of desolation was set up, it need not be a matter of surprise that there should be an uncertain element in the chronology. The 2300 evenings mornings—or 1150 whole days (Dan. viii. 14), corresponding with correlative periods of 1290 and 1335 days, may denote the setting up of the abomination of desolation by Antiochus ; the additional forty-five days of the latter period are referred by Jerome to the death of the tyrant, which took place forty-five days after the cleansing of the sanctuary.

CHAPTER VII.

HISTORICAL MINUTENESS OF DANIEL XI.

THE historical complexion of this chapter, which more than anything else has tended to invalidate the prophetic character of the Book of Daniel, demands special notice. Before, however, we enter upon its examination, it will be necessary to glance at the tenth chapter which precedes it. This chapter is occupied with a magnificent vision, probably of the archangel Michael; the terms, however, in which it is described are of a disjointed and fragmentary character, and present the appearance of being either a reduplication¹ of the same event, or the comment of a transcriber incorporated into the text. That the vision is partly occupied with Persian affairs may be gathered from the fact that it is seen in the third (LXX, *first*) year of Cyrus, and that mention is made of the kings of Persia. It would also seem to be descriptive of terrific conflict, such as that which took place between Greece and Persia, the clause, "the thing was true and the time appointed was long" (x. 1), being more

¹ Compare "The thing was true" (x. 1), with "I will show thee that which is noted in the Scripture of truth" (x. 21), and "now I will show thee the truth" (xi. 2). The great warfare (*δύναμις μεγάλη*, Theodotion) with "Lo the prince of Grecia shall come . . . and he (Xerxes) shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia" (x. 20; xi. 2). The man clothed in linen by the river Hiddekel (x. 4, 5), with "the man clothed in linen upon the waters of the river" (xii. 6, 7). "My comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength" (x. 8), with "my sorrows are turned upon me, and I retained no strength" (x. 16). The "deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground" (x. 9), with "I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb" (x. 15). "And behold an hand touched me" (x. 10), with "One like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips" (x. 16). "Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me" (x. 13), with "there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince" (x. 21; xi. 1; xii. 1).

correctly rendered "the thing was truth, and the warfare great": *Vcemeth ha davar vetsaba gadol*—*Eaque vera et magnorum bellorum* (Rosenmüller). Daniel is represented as "mourning three full weeks" of days, in contradistinction to weeks of years. Michael, "one of the chief princes," is sent to comfort him with the assurance of the destruction of the oppressor and the deliverance of the people. Daniel is further told, that after he (Michael) had contended with the prince of Persia who had withstood¹ him (Daniel) for "one and twenty days," the prince of Greece would come and fight with him (the prince of Persia) also—an idea founded on the belief that angels were the tutelary guardians of nations, who fought their battles for them and espoused their cause. As in the Apocalypse Michael and his angels fight against the Devil and his angels previous to the conflict of the saints with Antichrist, so in the present instance, the heavenly contest is an earnest of the coming strife. We may expect therefore to find in this historical chapter a delineation of the wars between Greece and Persia, and the political effect which this tremendous collision would have upon the Jews. And this is actually what we do find, the eleventh chapter being little else than an epitome of the reign of those Syro-Egyptian kings which introduce "the vile person," Antiochus, and forming a history of the struggles of the Jewish Church with the Greek powers up to the death of its great adversary (xi. 45). The attention to particulars perceptible in this chapter has perhaps more than anything else tended to invalidate its predictive character; the plots and counterplots, the successes and reverses, the alliances and ruptures of these kings of the North and of the South being detailed in it with unusual minuteness; and as the time draws on for the

¹ It is supposed that this opposition refers to some hindrance on the part of the Persian kings to the rebuilding of Jerusalem for "one and twenty days," or years, "each day for a year," (Ezek. iv. 4-6) in the reigns of Cyrus, Ahasuerus, and Artaxerxes, during which time Daniel did not go up to Jerusalem, but remained with the kings of Persia.

oppressor himself to appear upon the scene, the narrative appears to lose the semblance of a prophetic composition altogether and to wear the aspect of unmixed history.¹

This eleventh chapter commences with the enumeration of three kings yet standing up (*adhuc stantes*) in Persia, and of a fourth distinguished from the rest by his strength and riches. These are conceived to be, Cyrus, Darius Hystaspis, Ahasuerus or Artaxerxes, and Xerxes. "Behold there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than *they* all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia" (xi. 2). The names of the first three of these four Persian kings are to be met with, in the order we have given above, in Ezra vi. 14, and in the apocryphal book of 1 Esdras vii. 14: where they are represented as issuing and again countermanding edicts for the restoration of the Jewish city and temple, after their destruction by the Babylonians; the name of the third king, Ahasuerus, being interchangeable with Artaxerxes, as may be seen by a comparison of Ezra iv. 6 with Ezra iv. 7. It is probable that the Maccabean author of the Book of Daniel may have been acquainted with that of Ezra, and therefore selected the kings mentioned in that book as those most conversant with Jewish affairs; the object of the writer, according to Jerome, being rather to single out remarkable

¹ Bishop Newton observes: "It may be proper to stop here, and reflect a little how particular and circumstantial this prophecy is concerning the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, from the death of Alexander to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. There is not so complete and regular a series of their kings, there is not so concise and comprehensive an account of their affairs, to be found in any author of those times. The prophecy is really more perfect than any history. No one historian hath related so many circumstances, and in such exact order of time, as the prophet hath foretold them. . . . This exactness was so convincing that Porphyry could not pretend to deny it: he rather laboured to confirm it, and drew this inference from it, that the prophecy was so very exact that it could not possibly have been written before, but must have been written in, or soon after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, all being true and exact to that time, and no farther."

eras, than to follow exact historical order. The fourth “far richer than *they* all,” who, “by his strength through his riches should stir up all (Asia) against the realm of Grecia,” needs no comment, for the reference to Xerxes is as patent as the historical character of the so-called prophecy. It would be simply impossible, without actual mention by name of the person concerned, to depict in plainer terms the ambitious design of the insatiable Persian, which resulted in the extermination of the aggressor, and laid the foundation of subsequent Greek rule in Asia.

ALEXANDER AND HIS FOUR POTENT SUCCESSORS,
SELEUCUS NICATOR, PTOLEMY LAGI, LYSIMACHUS,
AND CASSANDER.

“And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven ; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled ; for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those” (xi. 3, 4).

These verses are descriptive of the Macedonian kingdom of Alexander and his four potent successors. The “mighty king,” beyond all reasonable doubt, is Alexander, surnamed “The Great,” from his almost superhuman exploits, whose dominion extended from the Mediterranean to the Indus, and from Egypt to Babylon. At the very summit of his greatness his kingdom is “broken” by his sudden, and possibly treacherous¹ death, and “divided toward the four winds of heaven” ; none of “his posterity” succeeding to his world-wide empire, although he left two sons, Hercules and Alexander. This fourfold division is expressly stated to be not “according to his strength” (LXX), nor “according to

¹ . . . “Προδοθεὶς δολίῳ ἐταίρῳ.

Ἰνδοὺς γὰρ προλιπόντα καὶ εἰς Βαβυλῶνα μολῶντα
Βάρβαρον ἐξολέσει τοῦτον φόνον ἀμφὶ τραπέζης.”

Orac. Sibyll., lib. ix. 222-223.)

his dominion which he ruled" as sole autocrat; or, as it is elsewhere expressed, "four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power" (viii. 22). The kingdom of the "four notable ones," indistinctly alluded to by "the four winds," is again sub-divided into ten horns," *i.e.*, ten kings of Syria and Egypt which are enumerated in order; ¹ "for his (Alexander's) kingdom shall be plucked up even for others beside those."

THE TEN HORNS.

PTOLEMY PHILADELPHUS AND ANTIOCHUS THEOS.

"And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion. And in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times" (xi. 5, 6).

The first of these ten kings, called "the King of the South" (the kingdom of Egypt, LXX), who should be strong above, or out of his princes—*min sarav*—would seem to be Ptolemy Philadelphus, the youngest son of Ptolemy Lagi, whose empire, according to Jerome,² surpassed that of his father. The prince who should show himself strong *against* him, and whose "dominion shall be a great dominion," is thought to be Antiochus II., surnamed the "God," who for many years was engaged in destructive and successful warfare with Phila-

¹ "Idcirco autem cetera regna dimittens, Macedoniae videlicet et Asiae, tantum de Aegypti et Syriae narrat regibus: quia in medio Judaea posita, nunc ab illis, nunc ab istis regibus tenebatur: et scripturae sanctae propositum est, non externam absque Judaeis, historiam texere, sed eam quae Israeli populo copulata est."—HIERON.

² "Narrant enim historiae, habuisse eum peditum ducenta millia, equitum viginti millia, curruum vero duo millia, elephantos, quos primus eduxit ex Aethiopia, quadrigentas, naves longas, quas nunc Liburnas vocant, mille quingentas, alias, ad cibaria militum deportenda, mille; auri quoque et argenti grande pondus."—HIERON.

delphus.¹ Anxious to bring the contest to a close, which had lasted for a considerable time, "in the end of years, they (*the before-named princes*) shall join themselves together" by mutual alliance,² and enter into a treaty. By this treaty Ptolemy Philadelphus gives³ his daughter Berenice in marriage to Antiochus Theos, king of Syria: "The king's daughter of the South shall come to the king of the North to make an agreement" (margin—*rights—facere recta quæ curva sunt et tortuosa, hinc efficere conciliationem*). Laodice, however, the former wife of Antiochus, who had been divorced to make room for Berenice, being recalled by Antiochus upon the death of Ptolemy, causes Berenice and her son, "whom she brought forth," to be put to death, and places her own son Seleucus Callinicus on the throne. Thus "she (Berenice) does not retain the power of the arm,"⁴ but is "given up" to death. The object for which the alliance was contracted failed, and the countries of Syria and Egypt continued to engage in war as before.

¹ "Totis Babylonis atque Orientis viribus dimicavit."—HIERON.

² "Primum Syriæ regnavit Seleucus cognomento Nicator : secundus Antiochus qui appellatus est Soter ; tertius et ipse Antiochus qui vocabatur Θεός. Iste adversus Ptolemæum Philadelphum, qui secundus imperabat Ægyptiis, gessit bella quam plurima . . . Volens itaque Ptolemæus Philadelphus post multos annos molestum finire certamen, filiam suam, nomine Berenicen, Antiocho uxorem dedit, qui de priore uxore, nomine Laodice, habebat duos filios, Seleucum qui cognominatus est Callinicus, et alterum Antiochum . . . Antiochus autem (Theos) Berenicen consortem regni habere se dicens, et Laodicen in concubinæ locum, post multum temporis (mortuo Ptolemæo Philadelpho) amore superatus, Laodicen cum liberis suis reduxit in regiam. Quæ metuens ambiguum viri animum, ne Berenicen reduceret, virum per ministros veneno interfecit. Berenicen autem cum filio qui ex Antiocho natus erat, Icadioni et Genneo, Antiochiæ principibus, occidendam tradidit, filiumque suum Seleucum Callinicum, in patris loco regem constituit."—HIERON.

³ "Deduxitque eam usque Pelusium ; et infinita auri et argenti millia, dotis nomine dedit : unde *φερνοφόρος*, i.e. *dotalis* appellatus est."—HIERON.

⁴ "And his arm shall be paralysed, and those who go with him, and shall not prevail ; for his arm shall not establish strength, and shall abide for a time."—LXX.

SELEUCUS CALLINICUS AND PTOLEMY EUERGETES.

"But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail: and shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north. So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land" (xi. 7, 8, 9).

In revenge¹ for the murder of his sister Berenice, her brother Ptolemy Euergetes, "a branch of her roots," enters into "the fortress of the king of the north," Seleucus Callinicus; and so far prevails that he takes (according to Jerome) Syria, Cilicia, the upper parts beyond the Euphrates, and almost the whole of Syria. Following the ancient practice of carrying away the gods of the vanquished nations, Ptolemy "carries captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold," amounting to 2,500 vases and images; for which exploit the Egyptians gave him the title of Euergetes or Benefactor.² After this he abstains for some time from war with Seleucus Callinicus; the clause "he shall continue more years than the king of the north," being more correctly rendered, "he shall stand away from (conflict with) the king of the north for some years." The text immediately following is somewhat obscure; but if, with Rosenmüller, ver. 9 be rendered, "The king of the north shall come into the kingdom of the king of the south (*i.e.* to invade it), and shall return into his own land," the passage may signify that subsequently Seleucus

¹ "Ταῦτα (eandem intellige sororis et filii illius) τινύμενος Λαοδίκην ἔκτεινε, καὶ εἰς Συρίαν ἐνέβαλε, καὶ εἰς Βαβυλῶνα ἤλασε."—APPIAN, *De Reb. Syr.* lxxv.

² "Quum audisset (Ptolemæus Euergetes) in Ægypto seditionem moveri, diripiens regnum Seleuci quadraginta millia talentorum argenti tulit, et vasa pretiosa simulacraque deorum, duo millia quingenta, in quibus erant et illa quæ Cambyses captâ Ægypto in Persas portaverat. Denique gens Ægyptiorum idolatriæ dedita, quia post multos annos deos eorum retulerat, *Euergetem* cum appellavit."—HIERON.

Callinicus made an unsuccessful expedition against Egypt which ended disastrously to himself. "He first (says Mr. Westcott) "collected a fleet which was almost totally destroyed by a storm; and then, as if by some judicial infatuation, he came against the realm of the king of the south, and (being defeated) returned to his own land" (to Antioch).¹

ANTIOCHUS THE GREAT AND PTOLEMY PHILOPATOR.

"But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress. And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand. And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it" (xi. 10, 11, 12).

The sons of Seleucus Callinicus (Seleucus Ceraunus and Antiochus Magnus) with the intention of avenging the disgrace of their father, take up arms against Ptolemy Philopator, the son of Euergetes, a prince "to the last degree sensual, effeminate, and debased"—"His sons (LXX, his *son*) shall be stirred up and shall assemble a multitude of great forces." One ² of these, Antiochus, the most celebrated, "shall certainly come and overflow and pass through," like a torrent which has burst its banks, as far as Raphia, the "fortress" of the king of the south. Ptolemy Philopator, however, defeats the forces of Antiochus at Raphia, near Gaza, amounting to 72,000 foot, 2,000 horse, and 102 elephants, whilst those of

¹ "Rex Syriæ, Seleucus Callinicus, qui, quum post Ptolemæi ex Syriâ discessum civitates, quæ ab ipso defecerant, imperio suo restituisset, veluti par viribus bellum Ptolemæo intulit, sed naufragium passus victusque prælio, trepidus Antiochiam refugit."—JUSTIN. xxvii. 2.

² "Inchoatum est bellum a Seleuco Cerauno, continuatum post mortem illius ab Antiocho."—POLYB. v. 40. The verb "he shall certainly come" (*ou-va-vo*) is in the singular number, showing that only one of the sons of Seleucus is intended.

Ptolemy were of nearly equal¹ number. In this memorable battle 10,000 of the troops of Antiochus were slain, and 4,000 taken prisoners—"the multitude² shall be given into his hand." Ptolemy however "was not strengthened by the casting down of ten thousands," but contenting himself with the recovery of the provinces of Cœle-Syria, Phœnicia, and Palestine, which had been taken from him by Antiochus, returned once more to his luxurious³ mode of life.

ANTIOCHUS THE GREAT AND PTOLEMY EPIPHANES.

"For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches. And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall. So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand" (xi. 13, 14, 15).

"After certain (13) years" Ptolemy Philopator dies, and is succeeded by his son Ptolemy Epiphanes, a child of the age of five years. Taking advantage of his youth, Antiochus the Great again invades Egypt. He is joined in this fresh campaign by Philip III., king of Macedon, on the condition that each should annex to their own empire those cities of Egypt which were nearest to their own country,—“many

¹“Habuit Ptolemæus et Raphiam peditum lxx. millia, equitum v. millia, elefantos lxxiii.”—POLYB. 86.

²“Quum acriter pugnatum esset, et cornu quidem, cui Antiochus præfuerat, vicisset, alterum tamen cum mediâ acie succubuit, cæsis *ad decem millia* et amplius, vivisque captis circiter quatuor millibus, necnon compluribus elefantis.”—POLYB. i. 1.

³“Spoliasset (Ptolemæus Philopator) regno Antiochum, si fortunam virtute juvisset. Contentus tamen recuperatione urbium quas amiserat, factâque pace, avide materiam quietis arripuit; revolutusque in luxuriam, occisâ Eurydice uxore eâdemque sorore suâ, Agathocleæ meretricis capitur illecebris, et regii nominis ac majestatis oblitus, noctes in stupris, dies in conviviis consumsit.”—POLYB. 87; JUSTIN. xxx. 1.

stand up against the king of the south." During the contests between Antiochus and Ptolemy Epiphanes, the Jews, equally sufferers both when he was beaten and when he was victorious, and as Josephus says, "like a ship in a storm which is tossed by the waves on both sides," divided themselves into two parties espousing different interests. The Syrian party, called in ver. 17 "the upright ones," "went over to Antiochus of their own accord and received him into Jerusalem, and gave plentiful provision to all his army, and to his elephants, and readily assisted him when he besieged the garrison which was in the citadel" (Ant. xii. 3). The Egyptian party, here called "the robbers of thy people," hoping to "establish the vision" of Isaiah xix. 19, went down in great numbers into Egypt under Onias the high priest, and "built a temple and an altar to God at Leontopolis, like indeed to that in Jerusalem, but smaller and poorer" (Ant. xiii. 3). ("Thoughts shall arise against the king of Egypt, *and he shall rebuild what is fallen of thy nation*, and he shall arise to raise up the prophecy," LXX). "But they shall fall:" the attempt shall be unsuccessful; the city of Onias being afterwards destroyed by the Jews themselves.

In the meanwhile complete success attends the arms of Antiochus. "The king of the north comes and casts up a mount, and takes the most fenced cities" of Syria from Scopas, the general of Ptolemy, defeats him with great loss at Paneas, near the sources of the Jordan, and finally reduces him to capitulate with 10,000 of his men at Sidon,¹—"The arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people (the troops sent by Ptolemy to assist Scopas), neither

¹ "Antiochus volens Judæam recuperare et Syriæ urbes plurimas (quas dum ab eo bellum gereretur cum Attalo, Pergami rege, iterum occupaverat Scopas, dux Ptolemæi), Scopam juxta fontes Jordanis, ubi nunc Paneas condita est, inito certamine fugavit, et cum decem millibus armatorum obsedit clausum in Sidone. Ob quem liberandum misit Ptolemæus duces inclytos Eropum et Menoclem et Damoxenum (cum delectâ manu). Sed obsidionem solvere non potuit, donec fame superatus Scopas manus dedit, et nudus cum sociis dimissus est."—HIERON.

shall there be any strength to withstand ; but he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him."

"And he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed (or, perfected). He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him ; thus shall he do : and he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her : but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him " (xi. 16, 17).

Assisted by those "upright" Jews who were favourable to his designs (so called in contradistinction to the "robbers" who took the part of Ptolemy), Antiochus adds Judea to his dominions. He stands in the glorious land (*terra Israelitica* ; comp. Jer. iii. 19 ; Ezek. xx. 6, 15 ; Zech. vii. 14), and assists the Jews in the work of repairing their city and finishing their temple. "After this," says Josephus, "Antiochus made a friendship and a league with Ptolemy, and gave him his daughter ('the daughter of women,' *puella*) Cleopatra to wife, and yielded up to him Cœle-Syria, Samaria, Judea, and Phœnicia, by way of dowry" (Ant. xii. 4). This marriage was contracted probably with a view of retaining these provinces under his own power, thus "corrupting" the mind of his daughter to favour his designs upon Egypt.¹ She, however, does not "stand on his own side, neither is for him" ; for she takes the part of her husband Ptolemy instead of her father Antiochus.

"After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many : but a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease ; without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him. Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land : but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found " (xi. 18, 19).

After his successes in Egypt, Antiochus captures Rhodes,

¹ "Volens Antiochus non solum Syriam, et Ciliciam, et Lyciam, et alias provincias, quæ Ptolemæi fuerant partium, possidere, sed in Ægyptum quoque regnum suum extendere, filiam suam Cleopatram . . . respondit Ptolemæo et tradidit, promissâ ei dotis nomine Cœle-Syriâ, et Judæâ . . . Neque vero obtinere potuit Ægyptum, quia Ptolemæus Epiphanes et duces ejus, sentientes dolum, cautius egerent, et Cleopatra magis viri partes quam parentis fovit."—HIERON.

Samos, Colophon, and other islands and maritime places on the coast of Asia Minor ; and, crossing the Hellespont, enters, by the advice of Hannibal, upon war with the Romans. But “a prince for his own behalf (Lucius Scipio) shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease ; without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him :” (*sed cessare faciet imperator quidam opprobrium ejus illi ; præterquam quod opprobrium ejus convertet in ipsum*). Vanquished by the Roman consul with terrible slaughter at Magnesia,¹ he with difficulty obtained peace from the Romans on the severe conditions that he should evacuate Europe, cede all his possessions on the Roman side of Mount Taurus, and pay the enormous sum of 15,000 Euboic talents to cover the expenses of the war. Returning to the “fort of his own land” (Syria), he was slain in an unsuccessful attempt² to plunder the temple of Belus, or Jupiter, in Elymais, with a view, it is supposed, of collecting means to pay the tribute imposed by the Romans,—“He shall stumble and fall, and not be found.”

THREE KINGS WHICH FELL.

I. SELEUCUS PHILOPATOR.

“Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom : but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle” (xi. 20).

Seleucus Philopator, the “raiser of taxes in the glory of

¹ “Quo in prælio infelici amisit, innumeratis captivis, circiter l. millia ; vix enim cæsorū numerus iniri potuit præ multitudine ; elephantis etiam interfectis, præter quindecim qui vivi fuerunt capti. Pacem Antiochus impetravit a Romanis hæc demum conditione ut Europâ cederet, et Asiâ omni cis Taurum.”—LIV. “Tantam enim apud Magnesium cladem accepit Antiochus, ut ἡ βασιλεὺς Ἀντίοχος ὁ Μέγας dicerent homines.”—APPIAN. *De Reb. Syr.* c. 37.

² “Antiochus quum gravi tributo pacis, a Romanis victus, oneratus esset : sive inopiâ pecuniæ compulsus, sive avaritiâ, sollicitatus, quâ sperabat se sub specie tributariæ necessitatis excusatus sacrilegia commissurum ; adhibito exercitu, noctu templum Elymæi Jovis (Τοῦ Βήλου—STRABO) aggreditur. Quâ re proditâ, concursu incolarum cum omni militiâ interficitur.”—JUSTIN. xxxii. 2.

the kingdom" (*qui transire facit exactorem decus regni*, i.e. *Judæam*), succeeds to the throne of Syria. His reign is chiefly remarkable for an attempt to plunder the temple of its sacred treasures, possibly with a view of paying the taxes imposed by the Romans on his father Antiochus the Great. For this purpose he sends his treasurer Heliodorus to Jerusalem, who is deterred from his sacrilegious purpose by the appearance of an armed and terrible rider.¹ After an inglorious reign of twelve years he is assassinated² by Heliodorus; probably at the instigation of his brother Epiphanes; and is destroyed "within few days, neither in anger nor in battle;" without the martial renown and splendid achievements which distinguished his warlike father.

II. HELIODORUS.

"And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflown from before him, and shall be broken" (ver. 22). *Καὶ βραχίονες τοῦ κατακλύζοντος κατακλυσθήσονται ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ καὶ συντριβήσονται.* (LXX.) And the arms of the overflower shall be overflowed before him, and shall be broken.

¹ "Heliodorus, the royal treasurer, was immediately despatched to take possession of this unexpected fund (the riches of Hyrcanus deposited in the treasury of the temple) so opportunely discovered; for the finances of Seleucus were exhausted by the exactions of the Romans. The whole city was in an agony of apprehension; the high priest seemed in the deepest distress while the royal officer advanced to profane and pillage the temple of God. Suddenly a horse, with a terrible rider clad in golden armour, rushed into the courts, and made at Heliodorus with his fore feet. Two young men of great strength and beauty, and splendidly attired, stood by the rider, and scourged the intruder with great violence. At this awful apparition the treasurer fell half dead upon the pavement; was carried senseless out of the precincts of the sanctuary, and only revived after the promise of the high priest to intercede with his offended Deity." (2 Macc. iii.)—MILMAN'S *History of the Jews*.

² "Seleucus quem Philopatora Græci vocavere, quum paternis cladibus fractas admodum Syriæ opes accepisset, post otiosum nullis admodum rebus gestis nobilitatum annorum duodecim regnum, minorem natu fratrem (Antiochum Epiphanem) misso Romam in ejus locum filio suo Demetrio, revocavit ex fœderis legibus quo mutari identidem obsides oportebat. Vix ille Athenas pervenerat, quum Seleucus insidiis Heliodori, unius ex purpuratis, oppressus interiit."—LIV. xli. 19.

The arms of the overflower (so called because he had compassed the destruction of Seleucus), overflowed and broken before him, refers most probably to Heliodorus, whose prospects of obtaining the Syrian crown after the assassination of his master were frustrated by the unexpected appearance of Antiochus. Availing himself of the aid of the kings Eumenes and Attalus, who "courted his favour," the latter easily expelled Heliodorus who had usurped the throne, and installed himself in his place, obtaining by this act the title of *Epiphanes*, or illustrious.

III. DEMETRIUS.

"Yea, also the prince of the covenant : and after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully : for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people" (xi. 22, 23).

The third king subdued by Antiochus, here called "the prince of the covenant"¹ (*ἡγούμενος διαθήκης*, LXX), is most probably Demetrius, who had been sent as a hostage to Rome by his father Seleucus in the place of his uncle Antiochus Epiphanes ; the infringement of the "league" referring to the treacherous plots of Antiochus that Demetrius the lawful heir to the throne might be detained at Rome, in order that he himself might succeed to the throne of Syria. The statement that he should "work deceitfully, and become strong with a small people," applies with peculiar force to the scheming dissembler called in this book "the little horn," who beginning "with a small people" afterwards "waxed great even to the host of heaven," and "practised and prospered." The "three which fell" before Antiochus we have thought to be Seleucus Philopator his elder brother, Heliodorus the murderer of Seleucus, and Demetrius the son of Seleucus and nephew of Antiochus. These three stood in the way of the accession

¹ The absence of the article, as well as of the qualifying adjective "holy," shows that the covenant, as in ix. 27, is not that between God and his people, but simply an agreement between Seleucus Philopator and the Romans. Comp. "*ex fœderis legibus*."—LIV.

of Antiochus to the Syrian throne, and were displaced, or in the words of the prophecy "subdued and broken," to make room for the usurper.

Up to this point a succinct yet complete epitome has been given of the ten horns, or kings, who preceded Antiochus, among the last three of whom Antiochus arises; regard being had to those events in their respective histories with which the Jews were more immediately concerned. Hitherto their Syrian and Egyptian masters seem to have inflicted no greater injuries upon them than those to which they were locally and politically subject, but with the death of Seleucus Philopator a season is reached of more than usual trouble to the holy people. Accordingly the brevity which characterizes preceding descriptions is exchanged for comprehensive detail and historical minuteness, and the remaining verses of the chapter are solely occupied with the fortunes of the great oppressor of the Jewish nation.

ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES.

"And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries" (xi. 21).

An almost unanimous criticism has interpreted the "vile person" of Antiochus Epiphanes. He had been sent to Rome by his father as a hostage (1 Macc. i. 10), without any prospect of the crown, when upon the assassination of his brother Philopator by Heliodorus, this "wicked root" seized upon the throne of Syria to the exclusion of his nephew Demetrius. He is called a "vile person" (*despectus*) both on account of his previous condition as a hostage as well as of his actions, many of which were unworthy of the dignity of a king. Dean Milman says of him: "Antiochus united the quick and versatile character of the Greek with the splendid voluptuousness of an Asiatic. At one time he debased his royal dignity by mingling with the revels of the meanest of

his subjects, scouring the streets for his riotous frolics, or visiting the lowest places of public entertainment and the common baths. On the other hand, the pleasures of Antiochus were those of a Sardanapalus, and his munificence, more particularly toward the religious ceremonies and edifices, both of his own dominions and of Greece, were on a scale of truly Oriental grandeur." Polybius relates of him that he was in the habit of drinking to excess in the company of the meanest strangers, and that he would suddenly load those whom he had never seen before with unexpected gifts. Diodorus says, that notwithstanding some kingly qualities, he was utterly despised by all.¹ The prophecy describes the insidious manner in which he gained possession of the crown; cajoling the Romans, although in heart he was hostilely disposed towards them, to release him from his condition as a hostage; thus obtaining the crown of Syria peaceably and by flatteries.

"He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province, and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers. He shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: yea, he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time" (xi. 24).

The spoliation and plunder exceeding all that his fathers or his fathers' fathers had done, describes the devastation of neighbouring countries by this restless and unprincipled invader. Appian relates of him that "he governed Syria and the neighbouring nations with vigour, having Timarchus as satrap in Babylon; he warred against Artaxias king of Armenia, and, having taken him, died, leaving a nine years' old boy, Antiochus, to whom the Syrians gave the name of Eupator, on account of his father's valour." "Wherever he came" (says Bishop Newton) "he scattered among them the prey, and spoil, and riches; the prey of his enemies, the spoil of

¹ "Fuisse Antiochi consilia quædam et facta prorsus regia atque admiratione digna, quædam contra abjecta ideo et vilia ut ab omnibus sperneretur. Hinc *Epiphanes* quia vocatus, sed ob res gestas *Epimanes* (insanus) nominandus."—DIOD. SIC. lib. 31.

temples, and the riches of his friends, as well as his own revenues, being expended in public shows, and bestowed in largesses among the people" (1 Macc. iii. 30).

"And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him. Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain. And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed. Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land" (xi. 25-28).

After an easy conquest of the border provinces, Antiochus extends his ambitious designs towards Egypt. "When the (Syrian) kingdom was established before Antiochus, he thought to reign over Egypt that he might have the dominion of two realms. Wherefore he entered into Egypt with a great multitude, with chariots, and elephants, and horsemen, and a great navy, and made war against Ptolemy (Philometor) king of Egypt; but Ptolemy was afraid of him and fled, and many were wounded to death ('many shall fall down slain'). Thus they got the strong cities in the land of Egypt, and he took the spoils thereof" (1 Macc. i. 16-19). It is likely that Antiochus with his accustomed treachery corrupted the servants and friends of Ptolemy, and prevailed as much by deceit as by force of arms. Josephus relates that "he came with great forces to Pelusium, and circumvented Ptolemy Philometor by treachery and seized upon Egypt" (Ant. xii. 5); agreeing with the prophetic statement, "They that feed upon the portion of his meat (*i.e.* his servants) shall destroy him and forecast devices against him." "And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table;" Antiochus professing¹ to take the side of Ptolemy

¹ "Antiochus frustra tentatis mœnibus Alexandriæ (quo cum Cleopatrá confugerat Ptolemæus VII. Euergetes, rex creatus ab Ægyptiis loco patris Ptolemæi Philomctoris qui Antiochi in manu erat) abcesserat; ceterâque

Philometor against his brother Ptolemy Euergetes II. who had assumed the supreme power at Alexandria (*parcens puero et amicitiam simulans . . . puerique rebus se providere dicens.*" HIERON.). "But it shall not prosper." The crafty policy, which would set one brother against another with the view of reigning over Egypt through his nephew (Philometor), fails of success; for the Alexandrians at once make his brother king, and expel Antiochus. Baffled in his attempt to subdue Lower Egypt, he raises the siege of Alexandria and returns into Syria laden with treasures, "his court and even his own dinner table shining with a blaze of silver and gold unknown before in Syria."

"At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter. For the ships of Chittim shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant. And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate" (xi. 29-31).

Antiochus, says the writer of 2 Maccabees, "prepared his second voyage into Egypt" (v. 1); but this latter expedition was not equally prosperous with the former. A new and unexpected opponent¹ appears on the scene, and puts a check to the lust of Syrian aggrandisement. "Ships of Chittim" (*legati Romani navibus vecti Macedonicis*) are drawn up in order of battle in the bay of Alexandria, and the legate,

Ægypto potitus, relicto Memphi majore Ptolemæo (Philometore), cui regnum quæri suis viribus simulabat, ut victorem mox aggrediretur, in Syriam exercitum abduxit."—LIV. xlv. 11.

¹ "Ad Eleusinem transgresso flumen, qui locus quatuor millia ab Alexandriâ abest, legati Romani occurrerunt. Quos quum advenientes salutasset, dextramque Popilio, porrigeret, tabellas ei Popilius Senatûs consultum habentes, tradit, atque omnium primum id legere jubet. Quibus perlectis, quum se consideraturum, adhibitis amicis, quid faciendum sibi esset, dixisset. Popilius, pro cetera asperitate animi, virgâ, quam in manu gerebat, circumscripsit regem, ac priusquam hoc circulo exeat, inquit, redde responsum senatui quod referam. Tum demum Popilius dextram regi, tanquam socio atque amico, porrexit."—LIV. xlv. 11, 12.

Popilius Lænas, holding in his hand the fiat of Imperial Rome, commands Antiochus to depart from Egypt, and be content with his own territory. Upon the hesitation of the latter, the Roman, with the stick which he held in his hand, draws a circle around him in the sand as he stood upon the sea-shore, and bids him give an answer to the decree of the senate before he steps out of that circle. Compelled to depart from Egypt, and hoping to recruit his exhausted treasury by the plunder of the temple at Jerusalem, he vents on the Jews his displeasure against the Romans, and thinking, from the struggles for supremacy¹ of the rival high priests, Jason and Menelaus, that "Judæa had revolted, whereupon removing out of Egypt in a furious mind, he took the city (Jerusalem) by force of arms" (2 Macc. v. 11). He has intelligence with those Hellenizing Jews "who forsake the holy covenant"; for when "returning out of Egypt for fear of the

¹ "A false rumour of his death having reached Palestine, Jason, the dispossessed high priest, seized the opportunity of revolt against his brother, took the city, shut up Menelaus in the castle of Acra, and began to exercise the most horrible revenge against the opposite party. The intelligence of the insurrection, magnified into a deliberate revolt of the whole nation, reached Antiochus. The doom of the city had not been without its portent. Early in the year (B.C. 167), the heavens had been ablaze with what appeared horsemen in cloth of gold, tilting at each other, with the flash of swords and bucklers (possibly an *aurora borealis*). The wild tumult in the sky lasted for forty nights (2 Macc. v. 1). The ill-fated city, according to the omen, fell without much resistance. The conqueror marched without delay against Jerusalem, put to death in three days' time 40,000 of the inhabitants, and seized as many more to be sold as slaves. Bad as this was, it was the common fate of rebellious cities; but Antiochus proceeded to more cruel and wanton outrages against the religion of the people. He entered every court of the temple, pillaged the treasury, seized all the sacred utensils, the golden candlestick, the table of shewbread, the altar of incense; and thus collected a booty to the amount of 1,800 talents. He then commanded a great sow to be sacrificed on the altar of burnt offerings, part of the flesh to be boiled, and the liquor from the unclean animal to be sprinkled over every part of the temple; and thus desecrated with the most odious defilement the sacred place which the Jews had considered the one holy spot in all the universe."—MILMAN'S *History of the Jews*.

Romans he made an expedition against the city of Jerusalem in the 143rd year of the kingdom of the Seleucidæ, he took the city without fighting, those of his own party opening the gates to him" (Ant. xii. 5). He "pollutes the sanctuary of strength (*sanctuarium, arcem*, i.e. *templum*) and places the abomination that maketh desolate;" for "the king had sent letters by messengers unto Jerusalem . . . that they should pollute the sanctuary and holy people. . . . Now the fifteenth day of the month Casleu, they set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar . . . and did sacrifice upon the idol-altar which was upon the altar of God" (1 Macc. i. 44-46, 54-59).

"And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries; but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed" (xi. 32-35).

The Jews at this time were divided into the Judaistic and Hellenistic parties,¹ described in this book as "they that do know their God," and "such as do wickedly against the covenant." The latter of these are corrupted by the "flatteries" of Antiochus, and are induced by the promise of splendid rewards (1 Macc. ii. 18) to conform to the practices

¹ "By the year 170 B.C., Hellenism," says Döllinger, "had made such progress among the Jews that Antiochus Epiphanes was able to plan the extirpation of the Jewish religion, and the conversion of the temple at Jerusalem into a temple of Jupiter Olympius. The richer and nobler among them had made acquaintance with Greek manners and Greek luxuries of art and life in the courts of Antioch and Alexandria. The law, with its developments and restraints, was, any how, a heavy yoke in their eyes, and the proud rule of the Scribes a hateful tyranny. In face of the refinement of the Greeks and their ridicule, they grew ashamed of their 'barbarous laws,' which denied them all participation in the pleasures of the Grecian *symposia*: they would gladly have had *gymnasia*, theatres, and the contests of the arena in Jerusalem itself."

of the heathen ; whilst the former oppose manfully the iniquitous commands of the king, and "choose rather to die that they may not be defiled with meats, and that they might not profane the holy covenant." The "little help wherewith they should be holpen," may be significant of the efforts of the patriots, small indeed at first, but afterwards increasing in organization and formidableness ; for it was not till after the victory over Seron, that "the fear of Judas and his brethren, and an exceeding great dread began to fall upon the nations round about them, insomuch that his fame came unto the king, and all nations talked of the battles of Judas" (1 Macc. iii. 25, 26) : whilst the "fall of them of understanding to try them, and to purge and to make them white," presents a faithful picture of the untold sufferings of those martyrs who were "zealous for the law, and gave their lives for the covenant of their fathers."

"And the king shall do according to his will ; and he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished : for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god : for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces : and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory : and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain" (xi. 36-39).

A prominent feature in the character of Antiochus appears to be an excessive veneration for some deity distinct from those of his country's worship : this preference leading him to despise others in the same proportion. He appears to have compelled the heathen (1 Macc. ii. 19) as well as the Jews "to fall away, every one from the religion of their fathers," in order to acknowledge "a god whom his fathers knew not," but whom "he shall honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things ;" erecting his statue on the base of that of the god whom his fathers worshipped. Not only is he a "blasphemer" (2 Macc. ix. 28) against the

"God of gods," but neither to the "god of his fathers," nor to "the desire¹ of women," nor indeed to any (Syrian) god does he pay divine honours, for he eschews their religious worship altogether, and considers himself superior to them all. The only deity he is willing to allow is the "god of forces"; whether, as some have thought, Mars, the Roman war god, or Jupiter Olympius, to whom he dedicated the temple at Jerusalem. This strange god "he shall acknowledge and increase with glory"; shall set up his statue in "the most strong holds," *i.e.* in the most strongly fortified towns; shall appoint guards in every city to compel worship "according to the king's commandment," and shall promote those who recognize this deity to the highest positions as a reward of their obedience. "He shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain."

"And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him; and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps" (xi. 40-43).

¹ That by "the desire of women" (comp. Isa. xlv. 9) some Syrian goddess, especially worshipped by women, is intended, would seem evident from the connection in which the passage stands, in which are enumerated the deities whose adoration was refused by Antiochus. It is probable that this deity was Nanea or Diana (Venus, Maurer), whose temple Antiochus attempted to plunder (2 Macc. i. 13-16; 1 Macc. vi. 1-4). In a passage in Granius Licinianus, where an account is given of this transaction, Nanea is called Diana: this singular identification suggesting the supposition that the latter name may be a modification of Anais, Anaitis, Tenais, Tanith, under which, and possibly other names, the worship of this goddess extensively prevailed in the East. It has been thought that these various appellations all convey the idea of maternity; the goddess, like the Lucina of the Latins, being the presiding divinity of increase and childbirth.

It is uncertain whether these verses refer to previous invasions of Egypt, or to some subsequent invasion of which history has left no trace. The continuous reiteration of the same events throughout the book renders it probable that the former of these theories is correct; and to this it may be added, that there is no mention of any Syrian invasion of Egypt in the eleventh year of Antiochus, the war against Egypt having been put an end to in the ninth year of his reign, through the interference of Rome. During this campaign, in which, after his return from Egypt, he devastates Palestine and the neighbouring countries, "Edom, Moab, and the chief (1 Macc. v. 6) of the children of Ammon," the hereditary enemies of the Jews, not only "escape out of his hand," but possibly assist him in his aggressions upon Judea; the Libyans and Ethiopians, the ancient allies of the Egyptians (Ezek. xxx. 5), also follow "at his steps" and serve under the banner of the conqueror. The former of these, as in the case of the first restoration of the city and temple by Zerubbabel, are displeased "that the altar was built and the sanctuary renewed as before . . . wherefore they thought to destroy the generation of Jacob that was among them . . . Then Judas fought against the children of Esau in Idumea at Arabattine . . . and he gave them a great overthrow . . . also he remembered the injury of the children of Bean (probably the same as Baal-meon or Bethmeon, *i.e.* Moab) . . . and destroyed them utterly . . . afterwards he passed over to the children of Ammon where he found a mighty power, and much people, with Timotheus their captain; so he fought many battles with them till at length they were discomfited before him" (1 Macc. v. 1-8).

"But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palaces between the seas¹ in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him" (xi. 44, 45).

¹ "He shall fix his tent in Aphedano between the seas."—THEODOTION.

After his return from Egypt disastrous intelligence from the east and from the north awaits him. He had heard that Alexander had stored up riches in a city of Elymais in the country of Persia; "wherefore he came and sought to take the city and to spoil it:" but being defeated in his sacrilegious attempt, he returned "with great heaviness" to Babylon. As he came "with dishonour out of Persia," tidings arrived that the "armies which went against the land of Judea were put to flight, and that Lysias who went forth first with a great power was driven away of the Jews . . . also that they had pulled down the abomination which he had set up upon the altar in Jerusalem, and that they had compassed about the sanctuary with high walls as before, and his city Bethsura" (1 Macc. vi. 5, 7). Exasperated at his double loss, he "goes forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to make away many, and to plant the tabernacles of his palaces (his splendid tents) between the seas (the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea) in the glorious holy mountain" (Sion); or, as it is expressed by the Maccabean writer: "Then swelling with anger, he thought to avenge upon the Jews the disgrace done unto him by those that made him flee: therefore commanded he his chariot-man to drive without ceasing, and to despatch the journey—the judgment of God now following him: for he had spoken proudly in this sort, that he would come to Jerusalem, and make it a common burying-place of the Jews" (2 Macc. ix. 4). Vain and empty boast! The tyrant is stricken down by an "invisible and incurable plague," and "his grief was ever more and more, and he made account that he should die: wherefore he called for all his friends, and said unto them; The sleep is gone from mine eyes, and my heart faileth for very care: and I thought with myself into what tribulation am I come, and how great a flood of misery is it wherein now I am: for I was bountiful, and beloved in my power. But now I remember the evils that I did at Jerusalem, and that I took all the vessels of gold and of silver that were therein, and sent to

destroy the inhabitants of Judea without a cause. I perceive, therefore, that for this cause these troubles are come upon me; and, behold, I perish through great grief in a strange land" (1 Macc. vi. 9-13).

From the ease with which an interpretation has been given, it appears that chapter xi. expresses a different order of conceptions from the rest of the prophetical writings. In addition to its historical minuteness, it possesses another feature which yet more strongly distinguishes it from other prophecies; the writer dilating on events supposed to be future, and reducing within narrow limits those which happen near his own times—a mode of treatment, as we have elsewhere observed, foreign to the usual practice of prophetic writers. On the supposition that the author of this book lived at the time of the Captivity, it is difficult to understand why so large a portion should have been devoted to the more remote persecutions of Antiochus, to the neglect of other topics of nearer and more general interest. From the period of his rise out of the stock of Syrian kings to that of his most wretched fall, he is the pivot around which these visions revolve, and the welcome announcement of his death furnishes the key-note of exultation with which they close. Indeed the biographical, as well as the prophetical portions of this book, would seem illustrative but of one subject; the earlier chapters being occupied with tales of suffering for conscience sake, introduced, as it would appear, into the history for no other reason than because they are analogous to similar events experienced at a later period. And as the theme advances from personal biography to prophetic vision, the one idea which pervades the whole becomes more and more apparent. The internecine and perpetual wars between his predecessors, the kings of Syria and Egypt, the inauspicious alliance of Ptolemy Philadelphus and Antiochus Theos, the impotency of Callinicus, the piety of Euergetes, the voluptuousness of Philopator, the magnanimity of the great Antiochus, the helplessness of Ptolemy Epiphanes, the avarice of Seleucus,

the treachery of Heliodorus, the detention of Demetrius, owe to him their place in this prophetic history. True to its specific object, the narrative details even the minute particulars of his personal career: his contemptible character, unworthy of a son of the great Antiochus, his political insincerity and breach of public faith, his treacherous conduct, perfidious above that of the Syrian kings before him, his fierce countenance and unsparing vindictiveness, his unprovoked aggressions upon Egypt and neighbouring countries, his abject servility in the presence of the Roman legate, his contemptuous neglect of the gods of his country, his superstitious adoration of a strange deity, his impious blasphemies against the God of heaven, his superhuman and intolerable pride, his wanton and abominable desecration of the holy place, his unparalleled and exterminating persecutions of the chosen people, his unscrupulous and sacrilegious covetousness, his heaven-inflicted and remediless plague, and his sudden and inglorious death. And to keep alive in the memory of the nation the indignities which they suffered at the hands of this monster of humanity, and to rescue from oblivion the heroic resistance of "the people that do know their God," was a theme worthy of the re-awakening fervour of the Jewish intellect, and which found adequate expression in the visions of Daniel.

CHAPTER VIII.

MESSIANIC IDEAS.

IT will readily be imagined from the tenor of preceding observations, that we are not among those who conceive the author of the Book of Daniel to have given utterance to predictions which find an accomplishment in the person of Jesus Christ; and we have arrived at this conclusion, not because we are maintaining prophecy, in the sense of foretelling future events, to be impossible, but because the express terms of the book confine the subject within chronological limits which negative such a supposition. But whilst unable to endorse the traditional opinion that the writer saw the glories of Messiah, and spake directly of him, we admit that the symbols of Daniel have contributed to give shape to the Messianic conceptions of the Christian period, and that our prophet has delineated with greater appropriateness than those who preceded him, the features under which Jesus manifested himself to the world. Regarded from this point of view, the Book of Daniel may be said to be more thoroughly Messianic than any other book of the Old Testament. The appellation "Son of Man," a title in which our Lord delighted, would seem to be taken from this source. The glorious apocalypse of the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven owes its origin to the Danielic prototype of a "Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days." The destruction of the Christian Antichrist may be traced to the overthrow of the Antichrist of the Syrian period. The setting up of the abomination of desolation of the Roman period to a somewhat similar event of the days of Antiochus. The announcement of the approaching end of the world, so unhesitatingly advanced by the writers of the Apostolic age, resembles the consummation, or "time of the end," con-

tinually reiterated by Daniel. The judgment, when "the Son of Man should sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him should be gathered all nations" (Matt. xxv. 31), is reproduced in the "judgment set, and the books opened" of the former period. The resurrection accompanying that judgment, answers to the corresponding phenomenon when "many that sleep in the dust of the earth should awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt;" whilst the heavenly kingdom which our Lord declared to be "at hand," whose approaching reign of purity and glory he charged his apostles to announce, which he illustrated by so many exquisite parables and whose moral qualifications he insisted on with so much zeal and tenderness, takes its unmistakable rise from "the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, given to the people of the saints of the Most High."

To some a certain hermeneutical verdict may seem pronounced by our Lord upon the book whose ideas he appears to have accommodated to the circumstances of his Messianic career. But in their application of passages from the Old Testament, the writers of the New are for the most part inexact and arbitrary, "considering more the words than the meaning, and regarding neither the historical sense nor the context"; and we have no reason to assume that, in this particular, our Lord exercised a critical discernment in advance of that of his own age. It would be well for those to whom this statement may give pain to remember that the writers of the New Testament do not claim for their Master that infallible knowledge¹ which theological inference has

¹ Our Lord alludes to this limitation of knowledge where he says to his disciples after the resurrection, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put *in his own power*." *Τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ*, Acts i. 7. (Comp. *καποῖς ἰδιοῖς*, his own times, *i.e.* times known to him only: 1 Tim. vi. 15). Similarly the writer of the Apocalypse declares that "God *gave* unto (Jesus) the revelation of things which must shortly come to pass" (Rev. i. 1), and pronounces the Lamb worthy, by virtue of

ascribed to him. It was said of him without hesitation by those whose devotion to his cause and person cannot be called in question, that he "increased in wisdom," *i.e.* advanced gradually in intellectual development, as well as "in stature" (Luke ii. 52). He was not ashamed to allow that his knowledge was limited with regard to the most momentous of all his prophecies, the coming of his own kingdom. He foresaw the fact; declared that it should happen before the generation which had heard his words should pass away; but admitted that the exact day and hour were unknown to him (Matt. xxiv. 36; Mark xiii. 32). It is moreover seldom remembered that imperfection of knowledge would be a necessary condition of that state to which he humbled himself. If the perfect manhood of Christ consisted according to the so-called Athanasian symbol of a "reasonable soul and human flesh," the soul would necessarily be as subject to the infirmities of the human mind in its limitations of knowledge, as the body to the infirmities of grief and pain. It need not then surprise us to discover that Jesus shared the Messianic conceptions of his contemporaries,¹ and that his

his redeeming sacrifice, to open the Book which "no man—*οὐδεὶς*—in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth, was able to open" (Rev. v. 3-9). Comp. "No man—*οὐδεὶς οἶδεν*—*none knoweth*—no, not the angels which are in heaven, *neither the Son*, but the Father" (Mark xiii. 32); or, as expressed by St. Matthew, "*but my Father only*" (Matt. xxiv. 36). "This doctrine," says Mr. Houghton (Pentateuch Examined. Part III. Colenso), is expressly taught by our Lord himself; has the sanction of very many eminent Biblical writers, both ancient and modern; and is implied in the language of the formularies of our Church." "If one does not wish to deny," says Calvin, "that Christ has been made a true man, one must not be ashamed to confess that he has voluntarily subjected himself to all the things which cannot be separated from the human nature."—*Com. on Luke ii. 40.*

¹ Our Lord in his true humanity must have shared in many respects the received opinions of his contemporaries, for he was born not only as a man, but as a Jew ("He took on him the seed of Abraham," Heb. ii. 16); and as a Jew of Palestine in a certain age. He may be supposed therefore to have regarded Daniel (a prophet at that time in the highest estimation, and procuring "the opinion of a sort of divinity for himself among

apprehension of the Book of Daniel corresponded with that of the age in which he lived.

I. A topic prominently insisted upon by the prophet of the Old Testament is the establishment of a kingdom of the saints, or the holy people, which should succeed the breaking up of the dominion of the little horn. The gradual increase of this kingdom is shadowed forth under the emblem of a "stone cut without hands which became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth;" its superiority, in the assertion that it should "break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms;" its superhuman origin, in the statement that it should be set up by "the God of heaven;" while its durability finds expression in the words, "it shall never be destroyed, but shall stand for ever." We subjoin the passages which describe the rise and dominion of this universal and enduring kingdom.

"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces . . . and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (ii. 34, 45).

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to

the multitude," Ant. x. 11) as presenting the features under which Messiah was expected to appear with greater distinctness than other prophetic writers. It is well known that our Lord availed himself in his teaching of the sayings of the Jewish doctors who had preceded him, just as the prophets of the Old Testament regarded the utterances of their predecessors as common property, and unhesitatingly made use of them when occasion required. In like manner, the symbols of Daniel presenting the most suitable shape under which he might delineate his own Messianic character, no greater objection can be laid against his appropriation of them to his own case than against St. Jude and the author of the second Petrine epistle for their use of the Book of Enoch. It does not detract from the perfection of our Lord's sayings that some of them had been previously spoken by Hillel, neither does it take away from the value of the prayer which he has taught us that its petitions were not altogether unknown to the Jewish synagogue; and it need not invalidate the moral precepts of the gospel that they were accompanied by Messianic expectations which had already found expression in the books of Enoch and Daniel.

other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (ii. 44).

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (vii. 13, 14).

"And the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High" (vii. 27).

It is difficult to explain these exalted conceptions only of the political change in the fortunes of the Jewish people. It is true that the success of the patriots against the forces of Antiochus may have raised the national mind to a high pitch of enthusiasm, and they may have passed, in imagination, from throwing off the Syrian yoke to dream of universal empire. But it is more probable that, as in previous crises of their history, their hopes were tinged with Messianic expectations. The theory, however, of a Messianic kingdom to be established at that time is attended with serious if not insuperable difficulties. Traditional theology has sought to obviate these by explaining the "little horn" of chapter vii. of an Antichrist to be revealed hereafter ; the coming of a Son of Man to the Ancient of Days, of the second advent of Jesus Christ ; the kingdom to be set up by the God of heaven, of the future reign of the Messiah ; and the Danielic hope of a resurrection, of the general resurrection at the last day. But however desirable it might be to make these visions square with Christian expectations, it must not be overlooked that the prophecy relegates their fulfilment to the times of Antiochus. It is *when the beast (Antiochus) is slain* and his body given to the burning flame, that a Son of Man comes with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days, and receives from him a kingdom, that all people and nations and languages should serve him ; its Jewish character being asserted in the statement that it should be "given to the saints of the Most High" (Dan. vii. 11-14, 27) and should "not be left to other people."

Similarly it is declared that "*in the days of those kings*" (the successors of Alexander) the God of heaven should set up a Jewish kingdom "which should stand for ever." The time then as well as the character of this heavenly kingdom are plainly indicated in the prophecy, and if its establishment within the appointed period has not been verified by the result, the mistake must be put down to the enthusiastic expectations of the writer. This Messianic kingdom was also to be attended by a resurrection from the dead, and this, it is yet more confidently asserted, is a strong reason why it must be deferred to Christian times. Yet Daniel distinctly affirmed that "*at that time*" (the period of the death of Antiochus, Dan. xi. 45) "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. xii. 2)—a period still more exactly defined by the command of the angel to Daniel, "Go thou thy way till the end be : for thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot (LXX, *rise to thy glory*) at the end of the days" (Dan. xii. 13). No reasonable doubt can therefore exist as to the time laid down by the prophet for the resurrection, and if this hope was corrected by the course of events it only serves to show that the expectation was ill-founded.

Unhappily the mischief created by these false hopes was not confined to the generation which first entertained them. The expectation of a Messianic reign, of a coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven, and of an accompanying resurrection and judgment, was again entertained and with a similar result. Framing his Messianic career upon the Danielic prototype, Jesus appears, in common with his countrymen who regarded that ancient prophet as a "sort of divinity" (Ant. x. 11), to have relied too exclusively upon this by no means infallible book—a book whose suspicious character is enhanced by the misapprehensions to which it has given rise. Had Jesus selected as a ground on which to form his Messianic career the anticipations of earlier prophets, he might have been led to regard the Coming One as a victorious prince

of the line of David who should exalt the Jewish people to the highest pitch of national grandeur : but in adopting the picture drawn by Daniel, he conceived of the Messiah as a superhuman being, armed with supernatural powers, coming with the clouds of heaven, and raising the dead out of their graves. We need not say how these splendid anticipations were dissipated by the circumstances of his painful life, and still more inglorious death ; nor how the expectations which the affectionate regard of his disciples continued to entertain even after their Master's crucifixion, were frustrated by the result. In endeavouring to realize the Messianic ideal presented in the Book of Daniel, Jesus must often have doubted whether he was the Messiah, and hence the indecision apparent in his own mind as well as the reticence he enjoined upon the enthusiasm of his disciples. Whether Jesus himself uttered the eschatological sayings recorded in the synoptic Gospels, or whether they were put into his mouth by the writers of the evangelical histories, we have no means of determining with accuracy. In either case we are placed on the horns of a dilemma. If he gave them utterance, he was himself deceived ; if they were put into his mouth by the Evangelists after his death, they were negatived by the course of events. In the words of an able writer, "Either Jesus deceived himself or these discourses did not proceed from him."

The kingdom anticipated by Daniel in the days of Antiochus presents features of remarkable coincidence with the evangelical kingdom announced by our Lord. As the former is set up by "the God of heaven ;" so is the latter a "kingdom of heaven," and a "kingdom of God." As "the saints of the Most High take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever ;" so does the King say to them on his right hand, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." As the former has a Son of Man coming with clouds to the Ancient of Days, and invested with glory, dominion, and a kingdom ; so the latter

has a "Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." This correspondence of thought and language, too close to admit of merely fortuitous resemblance, forces upon us the conviction that the symbols of Daniel contributed to furnish the model of the evangelical narrative; the peculiar ideas as well as the striking imagery being due to no other prophet.

II. Another point of agreement between the prophecies of Daniel and the teaching of our Lord is to be traced to the eschatological element, or the introduction of topics pointing to a time of an end, or last days, perceptible in both.

The visions of the seer of the Old Testament, as it has been already observed, point to a consummation, or time of the end. The kingdom of Antiochus is to be "consumed and destroyed unto the end" (vii. 26). In the vision of chapter viii. the angel Gabriel informs Daniel, "Behold I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation, for at the time appointed the end shall be" (viii. 19). The martyrs of the Antiochian persecution are "purged and made white even to the time of the end" (xi. 35). Daniel is commanded to "shut up the words and seal the book even to the time of the end" (xii. 4). And the prophetic vision closes with a repetition of the same idea: "Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (xii. 13).

A similar eschatological element is found in the teaching of our Lord. Standing, as it were, at "the parting asunder of the times . . . at the end of one world and the beginning of that which followed . . . betwixt the heel and the hand" (2 Esdras vi. 7-10), he taught that "his appearing and his kingdom" would introduce the consummation of all things. He compared the brief interval which should precede his advent to a state of agriculture, in which wheat and tares should grow together "*until the harvest*," and the harvest, he said, is "the end of the world," or age. He encouraged his disciples to perseverance by the assurance of an impending

consummation of all things, "He that endureth unto the end shall be saved"; and exhorted them to preach the gospel as a witness unto all nations *before the end should come*; not with a view to the entire conversion of the heathen world, but that their unbelief might be without excuse—an event accomplished within the term of the apostolic age (Col. i. 6, 23; Rom. x. 18; 2 Tim. iv. 17; Acts xvii. 6). The announcement of this approaching *bouleversement* of the material world naturally excited the intense curiosity of the disciples, and anxious to know the time of the *parousia*, four of their number, under circumstances of peculiar solemnity, put to their Master the important question which was to solve all their doubts: "Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world" (Matt. xxiv. 3; Mark xiii. 4; Luke xxi. 7). Our Lord gave for answer that the end was not so immediately proximate as they appear to have imagined, "not yet" (Mark xiii. 7): "not by and by" (Luke xxi. 9): but that certain specified and intelligible signs should precede that event, whereby they might be aware of its approach. Amongst these he enumerated false Christs and false prophets, rumours of wars, famines, earthquakes, apostolic persecutions, universal preaching of the gospel, flight of the disciples from Judea, Jerusalem compassed with armies, the abomination of desolation set up, unparalleled, yet abridged, tribulation—"THEN THE END"—for "*In those days* after that tribulation," or as it is elsewhere expressed, "*Immediately*—*εὐθέως*—after the tribulation of those days," they—the men of that generation and the disciples of those times—"should see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." We have long ago confessed ourselves unable to evade the meaning or to qualify the force of these words.¹ After a mature recasting of the subject, we

¹ "Si la première génération Chrétienne a une croyance profonde et constante c'est que le monde est sur le point de finir, et que la grande révélation du Christ va bientôt avoir lieu. Cette vive proclamation 'Le

again submit the dilemma they involve to the honest, and, if possible, the unprejudiced consideration of all who "love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." For ourselves, a yearning after truth constrains us now, as in times past, to accept them in their natural and legitimate sense. We are convinced that no amount of exegetical sophistry can postpone these events beyond the time fixed for their accomplishment. Not merely once or twice, nor doubtfully and with hesitation, but repeatedly, solemnly, and distinctly, our Lord uttered the apparently incontrovertible statement that his kingdom was so near at hand that some of those who heard his words "should not taste of death till they had seen the Son of Man coming in his kingdom"—a doctrine accepted without reserve by his disciples, and reiterated by them and others during the apostolic age.

III. Among the peculiar ideas developed in the Book of Daniel which anticipate the doctrines of the gospel, that of a resurrection from the dead holds a conspicuous place. It has been said that great thoughts, as well as great men, are called forth by stirring times, and it seems to have been reserved for the unparalleled sufferings of the Maccabean age, to elicit the first distinct¹ conception of a resurrection from

temps est proche' qui ouvre et ferme l'Apocalypse : cet appel sans cesse répété 'Que celui qui a des oreilles entende,' sont les cris d'esperance et de raillement de tout l'age apostolique. Une expression Syriaque 'Maran Atha' 'Notre Seigneur arrive,' devint une sorte de mot de passe que les croyants se disaient entre eux pour se fortifier dans leur foi, et leurs espérances. L'Apocalypse, écrite l'an 68 de notre ère, fixe le terme à trois ans et demi. L'Ascension d'Isaïe adopte un calcul fort approchant de celui, ci . . . Jésus n'allait jamais à une telle précision ; il disait que la date de ce grand jour n'est connue que du Père qui ne l'a révélée ni aux anges, ni au Fils, que ce serait une surprise comme du temps de Noë et de Lot. . . . Mais ses déclarations sur la proximité de la catastrophe ne laissent lieu à aucune equivoque. 'La génération présente ne passera pas sans que tout cela s'accomplisse.'—RENAN.

¹ It is probable that the Book of Daniel contains the only clear anticipation of a resurrection to be found in the Old Testament : the texts usually adduced, such as "Thy dead shall live ; my dead body shall they arise" (Isa. xxvi. 19), typifying the political restoration of Israel ; the "dry

the dead. This doctrine is proclaimed by Daniel without equivocation or disguise: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt: and they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (xii. 2, 3): the proximity of this event being implied in the announcement made to Daniel, "Go thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest; and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (xii. 13).

This expectation,¹ peculiar to the Maccabean period, when bones" (Ezek. xxxvii.) prefiguring the return from the captivity; the living "Redeemer" (Job xix.) whose interposition in his behalf the patriarch should see for himself, and whom, although he had "escaped with the skin of his teeth" he should behold in his flesh, being adumbrations and illustrations rather than direct proofs of the doctrine in question. To this it may be added, that the rise of the rival sects of Pharisees and Sadducees, whose turning-point of religious difference was the subject of the resurrection, is traceable to the Maccabean period: a fact which may account for the want of clearness with which so important a doctrine is treated in other books of the Old Testament, as well as for its distinct announcement in the Book of Daniel.

¹ An event of unusual importance and especially a season of martyrdom was thought to be attended by a resurrection from the dead. The deliverance effected by Judas Maccabeus "when many that slept in the dust of the earth should awake" (Dan. xii. 2). The sin-offering sent by the Maccabean hero to Jerusalem "for those that died godly" (2 Macc. xii. 43.) The hope entertained by the seven brothers and their mother of a resurrection denied to Antiochus (2 Macc. vii.). The marvel accompanying the crucifixion when "the graves were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept arose" (Matt. xxvii. 52). The first resurrection of the martyrs who "lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Rev. xx. 4): attest the prevalence of this belief. It is not therefore surprising that the coming of Christ, expected at a season when the blood of the martyrs was poured out like water, should be attended with similar phenomena. It is remarkable that the features of the resurrection portrayed in Daniel correspond with those of the same event in the New Testament. "Michael, the great prince which standeth up for the children of thy people," reappears in the "archangel" of Paul and the "strong angel" of Rev. x. The voice of his "words" which cast Daniel into "a deep sleep with his face on the ground," is re-echoed in the "shout" with which the Lord shall descend, and in the loud voice (*voce[m] plenissimam sonit[us]*) "as when a lion

they were "mindful of the resurrection" (2 Macc. xii. 43, 44), is repeated in the "life and immortality brought to light in the gospel;" the law of a future state founded upon the resurrection of Christ from the dead being the main doctrine of its first preachers. The resurrection is, moreover, described by both in similar terms as a resurrection of the just and of the unjust, the "everlasting life and the everlasting shame and contempt" of the former being repeated in the "everlasting punishment and the everlasting life" of the latter (Matt. xxv. 46; John v. 29). Similar agreement is also observable in the picture drawn by each of the reward of the blest: the "righteous who shine as the brightness of the firmament and the stars for ever and ever" being reproduced in the "righteous shining forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father"¹ (Matt. xiii. 43).

IV. The conception of an accompanying Judgment would also appear to have been included among those eschatological ideas of Daniel which we have thought to be reproduced in the gospels.

Daniel beholds till the thrones were placed (*cast down*, E. V.) and the Ancient of Days did sit; thousand thousands

roareth" (2 Esdras vi. 13); and the promise of immediate reward to Daniel at "the end of the days" agrees with the similar expectation of the Christian period, "the end of all things is at hand."

¹ It has been usual to refer the hope of a resurrection which is asserted with the utmost plainness (Dan. xii. 1-3), to the deliverance effected by Judas Maccabeus and his brethren which might almost be compared to a resurrection from the dead (cf. Ezek. xxxvii.); the necessity, however, of such an unnatural explanation is removed when it is remembered that the Book of Daniel is a late work of the Maccabean period, when the idea of a resurrection had become common and familiar. We may add to this, that the distinct announcement of the doctrine in question affords a strong proof of a late authorship, as it was unknown to the supposed contemporaries of Daniel. The point, however, to which we call attention is the correspondence between the expectations of the Syrian and Christian periods. As in the days of Syrian trouble a resurrection was expected to accompany the coming of a Son of Man to the Ancient of Days, so the dead in Christ rise at his coming. The events are double one of another, and the time of their respective accomplishment accurately determined.

ministering unto him and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him; the judgment set, the books opened, and judgment given to the saints of the Most High.

These ideas would seem repeated in the writings of the New Testament with an almost exact fidelity. As, according to Daniel, judgment is executed contemporaneously with the coming of a Son of Man with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days; so according to the gospels, "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations"—for the purpose of judgment (Matt. xxiv. 30; xxv. 31, 32; xvi. 27; Luke xxi. 36). As, according to Daniel, judgment is "given to the saints of the Most High" (vii. 22); so "in the regeneration" (the times of the Messiah) the disciples "shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 29, 30). "Do ye not know (asks St. Paul) that the saints shall judge the world . . . shall judge angels" (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3); "for unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world (*soon*) to come, whereof we speak" (Heb. ii. 5). "The time is come (says St. Peter) that judgment must begin at (*from*) the house of God" (1 Pet. iv. 17). And to these passages we may add the vision of the Apocalypse, conceived not only in the spirit, but in the very words of Daniel: "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them . . . and the books were opened, and another book was opened which is the book of life (Dan. xii. 1), and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx.).

V. Among other points of resemblance between the Book of Daniel and the gospel histories, those passages which describe the setting up of the abomination of desolation by Antiochus Epiphanes (Dan. viii. 13; ix. 27; xi. 31; xii. 11), deserve especial attention, inasmuch as they are accommodated by our Lord to a similar profanation connected with

his own times. Quoting the words, and resting on the authority of Daniel,¹ he is said to have declared "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place, whoso readeth let him understand: then let them which be in Judea flee to the mountains" (Matt. xxiv. 15, 16). The two cases were as nearly parallel as the difference of age and of circumstances would permit. Antiochus "polluted the sanctuary of strength, and set up the abomination that maketh desolate"; Titus encompassed Jerusalem with armies, and desecrated the temple by the introduction of the Roman ensigns.

To this may be added the destruction of a great adversary² of the Jewish people by the coming of a Son of Man with the clouds of heaven, corresponding with the belief of the Apostolic age that the second Advent of Christ was to be accompanied by the destruction of Antichrist—an opinion, which, if not directly advanced by Jesus himself, seems to have been entertained by his immediate followers. We need not repeat here those numerous texts which describe the overthrow of the Antichrist of the Syrian period. Those who have followed us thus far will have recognised in Antiochus "the beast slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame," the judgment sitting upon the persecutor, and "taking away his dominion to consume and to destroy it unto the end." Similarly the destruction of the Christian Antichrist is not only a prominent feature in the Apocalypse, but occupies a conspicuous place in the eschatology of St. Paul. Indeed, according to that apostle, the Advent of Christ is delayed until the appearing of this adversary, who is described in

¹ The clause "spoken of by Daniel the prophet" (Mark xiii. 14) is omitted in the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS., and is not mentioned by Luke. It retains its place in Matthew.

² The idea of an adversary or adversaries to be destroyed by Messiah at his Advent, is found in the overthrow of the pagan kings of the third book of the Jewish Sibyl, in that of the seventy shepherds of the Book of Enoch, and of the impious Armillus slain by Messiah-ben-David of the Targum of Jonathan-ben-Uzzel.

terms which, as Bishop Newton says, are "copies of Daniel's originals" (2 Thess. ii. 3-8). The unparalleled distress which marks the appearing of the respective adversaries is described by both in almost similar words. According to Daniel it is a "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation to that same time" (xii. 1); according to the Evangelist, "Great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matt. xxiv. 21).

This reproduction of phrases and forms of thought shows a connection between the Book of Daniel and the Gospels perhaps hitherto insufficiently noticed. Whether the inferences to be drawn from the correspondence between them will harmonize with traditional opinions it may not now be worth while to inquire; but one thing is certain, that a blind adherence to stereotyped interpretation does little to advance the cause of truth.

VI. Such we conceive are the principal points of agreement between the Messianic ideas of Daniel and the qualities attributed to, or, as it would seem, appropriated by, our Lord. Under whatever aspect we contemplate what may be called the eschatology of the New Testament,—whether we consider the setting up of an abomination of desolation in the holy place, the announcement of an approaching end of all things, or the destruction of some great adversary; whether we turn our thoughts to the impending advent, resurrection, judgment, and kingdom of God,—we are met by phenomena of a similar kind which have already received expression in the Book of Daniel. Is it too much to say that the analogy is too close to be fortuitous, and that it seems probable that our Lord accommodated events with which the Maccabean deliverance was accompanied to his Messianic career, as he accommodated the historical fact of the setting up of the abomination of desolation in the days of Antiochus to his own times. The bold and exalted character of the symbolism of Daniel appears to have left room for doubt whether it should

be applied to the political restoration of the Maccabean period, or to some greater event of which that may have been the type; and it is perhaps owing to the inadequate fulfilment of these visions at the time appointed, that a further Messianic element was supposed to be concealed in them. It was a belief prevalent among the Jews of our Lord's time that the day¹ of the Messiah was revealed to Daniel, and it is probable that this credence may have given rise to the preference shown in the New Testament to the Messianic developments of this book over those of other prophetic writings.

It only remains to be said that as the Messianic expectations of the Maccabean period were attended with disappointment, so their revival at a later era was equally unproductive of results. The conclusion at which we arrive from our examination of the respective prophecies is that the *πρώτον ψεύδος* of the Maccabean period laid the foundation of delusions which found subsequent expression in the New Testament, and that the grand mistake of Christianity owes its origin to the Book of Daniel. The non-fulfilment, however, of these hopes within the term fixed for their accom-

¹ In the Talmud the day of the Messiah is said to be concealed in the Hagiographa, and known to Jonathan-ben-Uzziel, probably a disciple of Hillel, and the supposed author of the Targum on the prophets. "And a voice was heard, saying, 'Who is this who has revealed my secrets unto the sons of man?' Up rose Jonathan-ben-Uzziel, and said: 'It is I who have revealed thy secrets to the sons of man . . . But it is known and revealed before Thee, that not for my honour have I done it, nor for the honour of my father's house, but for thine honour, that the disputes may cease in Israel' . . . And he further desired to reveal the Targum to the Hagiographa, when a voice was heard: 'Enough?' And why? Because the day of the Messiah is revealed therein."—*Meg.* 3 *a*. Similarly the day of the Messiah was supposed to be hidden in the Targum on Daniel. Josephus also seems to intimate that a Messianic signification was attached to the stone of Dan. ii. "Daniel also declared the meaning of the stone unto the king; but I do not think it proper to relate it, since I have only undertaken to describe things past or things which have been (lately) done—but not the things that are soon about to happen"—(*Ant.* x. 10).

plishment, need not detract from the perfection of Christ's moral teaching, nor impair the authority of a single precept which commends itself by its intrinsic worth as the perfect law of love and liberty to mankind. While Jesus certainly founded his Messianic career upon the apocalyptic model¹ presented in the Book of Daniel, this was neither the essence of his doctrine, nor the secret of his power. For these we must look to his sublime conceptions of the Fatherhood of God, the superiority of his matchless sayings, the loveliness of his pure and devoted life, and the grandeur of his self-sacrificing and heroic death. Unwisely, therefore, do they imperil Christianity who would make it answerable with its life for every adventitious circumstance, whether of miraculous event or of Messianic hope, with which it stands connected. Above, and beyond all these, its adaptation to the religious instincts and the spiritual wants of man afford at once a proof of its Divine origin, and a pledge of its continuance. "As it was the moral and religious superiority of Christianity (says Dean Milman) which mainly subdued and won the world ; so that same power will retain it in willing and perpetual subjection. The strength of Christianity will rest, not in the excited imagination, but in the heart, the conscience, the understanding of man."²

¹ Whilst the kingdom of the saints is represented in the Book of Daniel as Maccabaic and temporal, the Messianic reign, to which it serves as a model, is declared to be heavenly and spiritual. This strange inversion of the principles of hermeneutical science, which is due to the non-accomplishment of the more literal expectations of primitive Christianity, has not failed to excite surprise. Sir Wm. Drummond has observed that the manner in which Christian readers of the Old Testament choose to understand it appears to him to be a little singular. While the Deity is represented with human passions,—and those none of the best,—they abide by the literal interpretation. Very different is their mode of interpreting these same Scriptures when they think there is any allusion made to the kingdom of Christ. Then they abandon the literal sense without scruple, and sometimes it may be thought without consideration.

² Preface to "The History of the Jews."

JOHN :

OR THE

Apocalypse of the New Testament.

INTRODUCTION.

THE close and perfect analogy between the Apocalypse of the Old and that of the New Testament, renders it necessary to have a clear conception of the former book before exploring the mysteries of the latter. With a view of facilitating this object, we have joined two separate disquisitions into one volume, to enable the reader to take a connected view of the whole question. The events which took place at the Maccabean period correspond in a remarkable manner with those that occurred two hundred and thirty years later in the Christian Church: instead, however, of regarding the former as predictive of the latter, it may with greater reason be supposed that they are merely typical of analogous calamities. It is observable that whilst the author of the second Apocalypse occasionally presses into his service figures employed by Ezekiel and Zechariah, he is profuse in his adaptation of those of Daniel. "From Daniel" says an able writer on this subject "he takes his historical conception of Pagan empire arising brute-like out of the sea; his vision of the Son of Man; . . . his king of the fierce countenance; his Michael, the great prince, the guardian angel of the sacred Hebrew nation; his resurrection judgment and kingdom of God." Availing himself of that facility of adaptation for which he is remarkable, he is led to consider the sacrilegious Syrian as the prototype of the impious Roman, and to recognize in the madman Antiochus the precursor of the monster Nero. The area of the former book is occupied with the description of a heathen king, who rises out of the ten horns of the Syro-Egyptian kingdom; is guilty of wanton blasphemy against the God of heaven; wears out the saints of the Most High by abominable tortures; compels the Jews to forsake their

own religion, and to worship the god of his own adoration: whose persecutions continue for the space of three and a half years, but who is finally "broken without hand" and overthrown. The area of the latter is taken up with the description of his counterpart and antitype. As Antiochus rises from the ten-horned Syro-Egyptian beast of Daniel, so does Nero rise from the ten-horned Roman beast of John. He too is guilty of wanton blasphemy against the God of heaven; wears out the Christian saints; compels them to worship his image; continues his persecution for three and a half years; and at last perishes miserably, or, in apocalyptic language, "goeth into perdition." Surely, this parallelism is not the result of chance. Letters thrown heedlessly upon the floor do not form themselves by accident into a beautiful poem, neither do emblems drawn from the Old and New Testaments, present analogies without design and purpose. As we compare the identity of symbol and vision, thought and language,¹ structure² and style, we cease to wonder that

¹ In addition to the historical resemblance already traced in the scenes described by Daniel and John, minor points of verbal imitation give weight to the position that the second Apocalypse is, to a great extent, a transcript of the first. Among the ideas and expressions common, if not peculiar, to both, we may compare the remarkable "I Daniel" (Dan viii. 15, 27), with "I John" (Rev. xxi. 2; xxii. 8). The confident appeal to veracity, "The vision which was told is true" (Dan. viii. 26; x. 21; xi. 2), with "These words are true and faithful" (Rev. xxi. 5; xix. 9). The unique idea, known only to the writers of Daniel and the Apocalypse, of "The Ancient of Days, the hair of whose head was like the pure wool" (Dan. vii. 9, 22), with "The head and hairs white like wool, and white as snow" (Rev. i. 14). "The judgment set when the Ancient of Days did sit" (Dan. vii. 9, 10), with "The great white throne and Him that sat on it" (Rev. xx. 11). The "Thousand thousands ministering unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him" (Dan. vii. 10), with the "Ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" (Rev. v. 11). "The Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven" (Dan. vii. 13), with "The Son of Man sitting upon a white cloud" (Rev. xiv. 14). "The dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him" (Dan. vii. 14), with "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ" (Rev. xi. 15). "Michael the great prince which standeth up for

interpreters should have fallen into the pardonable mistake of applying the circumstances of Antiochus to those of Nero.

the children of thy people" (Dan. xii. 1), with "Michael and his angels fighting against the devil and his angels" (Rev. xii. 7). "The time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time" (Dan. xii. 1), with "The great earthquake such as was not since men were upon the earth" (Rev. xvi. 18). The "Casting of the host and stars to the ground and stamping upon them" (Dan. viii. 10), with "The dragon drawing the third part of the stars of heaven and casting them to the earth" (Rev. xii. 4). "God of gods and Lord of kings" (Dan. ii. 47), with "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. xix. 16). "The living God" (Dan. vi. 20), with "The living God" (Rev. vii. 2). "All whose works are truth and his ways judgment" (Dan. iv. 37), with "True and righteous are thy judgments" (Rev. xvi. 7). "The four beasts coming up from the sea" (Dan. vii. 3), with "The beast rising up out of the sea" (Rev. xiii. 1). The "ten horns" (Dan. vii. 7), with the "ten horns" (Rev. xvii. 3). "The beast slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame" (Dan. vii. 11), with "The beast taken and cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Rev. xix. 20). "The lion, the bear, and the leopard" (Dan. vii. 4-6), with, "The beast like unto a leopard, his feet as a bear, and his mouth as a lion" (Rev. xiii. 2). "The ten horns are ten kings that shall arise" (Dan. vii. 24), with "The ten horns are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet" (Rev. xvii. 12). "The army of heaven" (Dan. iv. 35), with "The armies of heaven" (Rev. xix. 14). "Great Babylon" (Dan. iv. 30), with "Great Babylon" (Rev. xvi. 19). "The gods of silver and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know" (Dan. v. 23), with "Idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk" (Rev. ix. 20.) The worship of "the golden image" (Dan. iii.), with The worship of "the image of the beast" (Rev. xiii. 15). "The four men loose walking in the midst of the fire . . . and the form of the fourth is like the (a) Son of God" (Dan. iii. 25), with "The Son of man walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks" (Rev. i. 13). The command to "shut up the vision and seal the book" (Dan. viii. 26; xii. 4), with the converse direction, "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book" (Rev. xxii. 10). The enigma proposed to the wise, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" (Dan. xii. 6), with its equivalent, "Here is wisdom" (Rev. xiii. 18), and, lastly, the blessing of the resurrection, "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days" (Dan. xii. 12), with "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev. xx. 6).

² A marked resemblance may be traced between them in what may be called for want of a better name, the apocalyptic character of both

Not to speak of other points of resemblance, a principal event of immense and universal interest is shadowed forth under the emblem of a Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days and receiving from Him a kingdom which should last for ever. This unique symbol is reproduced in the Gospels and Apocalypse, and referred to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The importance attached to this ecclesiastical dogma sufficiently accounts for the desire to discover its prophetic announcement in the Book of Daniel. It was the great crisis for which the world was waiting. In unequivocal language, which even the science of hermeneutics cannot explain away, the Son of Man had announced his speedy Advent before the generation which heard his words had passed away. His apostles had reiterated his sayings. The Apocalypse had taken up the theme of an immediate catastrophe, and had rung out the knell of the old world. It ceases therefore to be a wonder that calamities described under such similarity of thought and diction, should have caused exegetical confusion, and that the Dromio-like resemblance between the chief actors in the respective scenes should have led interpreters to explain the Syrian abominations of those perpetrated by the Romans. These parallelisms exhibit so perfect an analogy between the Apocalypse of the Old and that of the New Testament as almost to compel the conclusion that either the writer of the latter book drew largely from the former, or that the respective authors

writings. After the period of the exile, a new style of teaching took the place of earlier prophecy. Angelic communications were introduced to supply the "Word of the Lord" which came to the ancient prophet, and vision and symbol superseded the sublime sayings which fell from the lips of the seers of old. Conceptions of a celestial hierarchy (possibly the result of contact with their eastern conquerors) began to be developed, and a continuous exertion of superhuman interposition was employed for the purpose of unfolding the Divine decrees to men. These apocalyptic features distinguish the writings of Daniel and John from the other Scriptures: the Book of Daniel, with its abundant angelology, differing as completely from the writings of the Captivity, as the Apocalypse from the gospels and epistles of the New Testament.

described the same events. We give our adherence to the former of these theories, not only because it appears to have been the habit of the writer to avail himself of ideas borrowed from the ancient prophets, but because likeness of subject demanded likeness of exegetical treatment. The earlier Apocalypse thus became the model of the latter, and the Syrian distress the type under which that of Nero found adequate expression. Both prophecies would seem to be bounded by their own historical limits. As the exegesis of the Book of Daniel cannot be extended beyond the times of Antiochus, so that of the Apocalypse must be confined to those of Nero.

We preface the second part of our subject with these Introductory Remarks, and pass on from the Apocalypse of the Old Testament to the consideration of that of the New.

PREFACE.

THE object of the Revelation was not only to give a pictorial representation of the Advent of Messiah, an event at that time the subject of general expectation, but also to announce a terrible retribution about to fall on the Roman city and nation for their cruel persecutions of the Christians and ruthless invasion of Judea. To make known this anticipated vengeance without at the same time exasperating their heathen adversaries, demanded the strictest secrecy and the most vigilant caution, and hence the studied mysteriousness which pervades the book. Unreal names of persons and places are accordingly substituted for the originals with a view to prevent recognition, except by the initiated. Hence, Rome is Babylon ; and Nero, "The Beast wounded to death whose deadly wound was healed." Hence the enigmatical attributes of existence and of non-existence ascribed to that Emperor, who is at one and the same time the Beast who "was and is not, and yet is." Hence, too, the occult problem of the "name and number of the Beast," and the bold challenge to men of understanding to decipher it. This designed obscurity not only answered its purpose at the time when the book was written, but has baffled the learning and ingenuity of succeeding ages. It is confessed, even in this nineteenth century, that the mystery of the Apocalypse has not yet been solved, and not a few are of opinion that it never will be cleared up. It would therefore be presumptuous on the part of the writer to affirm that he has probed the secret so long and so effectually concealed ; but this he ventures to say, that the interpretation now offered is so far satisfactory *to his own mind*, that no further effort at elucidation (and many have been made already) will be attempted.

It is now thought that this remarkable book, written with almost mathematical precision, exhibits a series of powerful contrasts between Christ and Antichrist. Not to speak of the antagonism between the miracles performed by the Two Witnesses and the "great wonders" wrought by the False Prophet, or between the universal adoration ascribed to Messiah and the compulsory homage accorded to the Beast, a contraposition is discernible between the three-fold state of Him "who liveth, and was dead, and behold, He is alive for evermore," and that of the Beast in his three-fold capacity of *Nero*, *Antichrist*, and *Pseudo-Nero*. In the first of these conditions the Beast is described as "rising up out of the sea,"—the Beast "as it were wounded to death, whose deadly wound was healed,"—"the first Beast"—the Beast "which has a wound by a sword and did live,"—the Beast who "was and is not,"—the Beast who "is,"—concealed, yet still living in spite of his deadly wound. In the second, he is represented as about to "ascend out of the bottomless pit," the abode of the Dragon, with whom he is associated; he is "not yet come," and when he cometh he continues but a short space,—“forty and two months.” It is to this Beast that the image is erected and the adoration paid, and all men are compelled to receive his mark, or the name of the Beast, or the number of his name, a name indubitably determined to be that of the Roman emperor. Finally, he goeth into perdition, a fate also reserved for his successor. In the third, the Beast "comes up out of the earth," like another Samuel evoked by the witch of Endor, and exerciseth all the power of the first Beast before him. With increasing clearness he is not only said to be a king, but the "*eighth*" King, and one, or like one of the seven preceding emperors of Rome: neither is it doubtful which emperor is meant for the Beast that "was and is not" (Nero); he too is the "*eighth*," or, as the same statement is probably repeated, the Beast that "was and is not" (Nero), "yet is," or shall again be present. To identify him completely with the Beast "coming up out

of the earth," he is designated the False Prophet who works miracles before the Beast, and who, like him, goeth into perdition. Is it too much to say that the threefold condition under which the Beast is presented removes a mass of erroneous interpretation, and supplies a key which fits the Apocalyptic lock. M. Renan approached very closely to this conception when he observed that possibly the symbol of the Beast "coming up out of the earth" might be explained of the False Nero.¹ The hint thrown out by the distinguished Orientalist carried out to its legitimate conclusion, not only served to identify the False Prophet with the False Nero, but led to the conception of the Beast in a threefold capacity as NERO, ANTICHRIST, and PSEUDO-NERO.

Impressed with a strong, although it may be a mistaken, conviction that at last the mystery of the Apocalypse has been discovered, the Author makes his humble appeal to "the grave, the reverend, and the learned," to investigate, and if necessary, to contradict or disprove the contents of his book.

N.B.—During the last seven or eight hundred years there has not been an epoch or a crisis in the history of Europe of which the hierophant of the day has not said that it was the opening of the Sixth Seal, the commencement of the premillennial age, or something of the sort, and in which it has not been discovered that all the events exactly fitted the "wonderful prophecies" of the Old or New Testament. Our own age does not appear, in this respect, to be behind the ages which have preceded, and many serious and well-meaning persons are deluded into the belief, that the events now taking place (or which have recently taken place) in Eastern Europe and Asia, have their prophetic announcement in the Books of Daniel and John. To all such idle conjectures, these pages will, it is hoped, afford a sufficient answer.

¹ "L'Antéchrist," p. 420.

THE KEY TO THE MYSTERY OF THE APOCALYPSE.

The Beast in his threefold capacity as NERO, ANTICHRIST, and PSEUDO-NERO.

CHAPTERS XIII. 1-10; IX. 11; XI. 7; XVII. 8; XIII. 11-18.

The Beast "rising up out of the sea."—Rome, or the Roman power, upheld by the Dragon and Nero,—the wounded head of the Beast.

The Beast "that shall (*soon*) ascend out of the bottomless pit."—Nero, "not yet come," but shortly to reappear as Antichrist.

The Beast "coming up out of the earth."—The False Prophet, or Pseudo-Nero, who procures homage for the image of the Beast.

CHAPTER XIII. 12; XIII. 4, 5; XIII. 12.

The "first Beast whose deadly wound was healed" *Nero.*

The Beast who "continues forty-two months, and is worshipped" *Antichrist.*

The Beast who "exerciseth all the power of the first Beast before him" *Pseudo-Nero.*

CHAPTER XVII. 8.

The Beast that "was and is not" *Nero.*

The Beast that "shall (*soon*) ascend out of the bottomless pit and go into perdition" *Antichrist.*

The Beast that "yet is," or, shall again be present (Sin. and Alex.), καὶ πᾶρεσται *Pseudo-Nero.*

CHAPTER XVII. 10, 11.

The Beast that "is," which *has*—ἔχει—"the wound by a sword and lived" *Nero.*

The Beast that "is not yet come, and when he cometh, he must continue a short space" *Antichrist.*

The Beast "*the same too* καὶ αὐτὸς is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition" *Pseudo-Nero.*

CHAPTER XVI. 13.

Three unclean spirits (cf. 1 Kings xxii. 19-23) proceed

"Out of the mouth of the Dragon" ¹ "which gave power unto the Beast"	.	.	.	<i>Dragon.</i>
"Out of the mouth of the Beast," "the angel of the bottomless pit"	.	.	.	<i>Antichrist.</i>
"Out of the mouth of the False Prophet," "that wrought miracles before him"	.	.	.	<i>Pseudo-Nero.</i>

CHAPTERS XX. 3; XIX. 10.

"He laid hold on the Dragon . . . and cast him into the bottomless pit"	.	.	.	<i>Dragon.</i>
"The Beast was taken and the False Prophet that was with him"	.	.	.	} <i>Antichrist and</i>
"These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone"	.	.	.	

CHAPTER XX. 10.

"The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire"	.	.	.	<i>Dragon.</i>
"Where the Beast and the False Prophet are"	.	.	.	} <i>Antichrist and</i>
"And shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever"	.	.	.	

¹ The Dragon is associated by similarity of emblems with the Beast rising up out of the sea, and consequently with Nero, its wounded head. Comp. "The great *red* dragon having seven heads and ten horns" (xii. 13), with "The *scarlet-coloured* Beast having seven heads and ten horns" (xvii. 13), also with the first Beast "having seven heads and ten horns" (xiii. 1). It follows therefore that the Dragon who gives to the Beast his "power, and his seat, and great authority," and who is worshipped together with the Beast, may be identified with Nero, as only another phase of the same power. Add to this that the respective features of Rome, the Dragon, and Nero, are combined in the symbol of the Beast "rising up out of the sea," so that what is affirmed of one may also be said of the other. Accordingly the Beast that "was and is not" (Nero, xvii. 8, *twice*, xvii. 11) has disappeared and his form is merged into that of the Dragon who upholds him, as the Beast "coming up out of the earth" gives place to the False Prophet.

JOHN :

OR THE

Apocalypse of the New Testament.

CHAPTER I.

DATE OF THE APOCALYPSE.

IT is almost superfluous to observe that the Apocalypse of the New like that of the Old Testament, presents features of more than usual exegetical difficulty. Independently of the mysteriousness which attaches to writings of this kind in general, the facility with which its symbols have been accommodated to persons and events widely distant and distinct from each other is an indication not only of the elasticity of which they are capable, but affords a melancholy yet instructive exhibition of the failure of ingenious conjecture when applied as a key to symbolic teaching. It does not, however, follow, because much that has been said or written on this book is mere guess-work in defiance of common sense as well as of sound rules of critical interpretation, that no meaning is ever to be found for it, or that emblems which to the first were easy of comprehension should be unintelligible to the light and research of the nineteenth century. If we have lost the key, as we have lost the knowledge of some science with which antiquity was familiar, it is perhaps because we have failed to realize the mental exaltation experienced by the writer as well as the peculiar complexion of the age in which he lived. From intimations scattered throughout the book, it would appear that it was composed

under the influence of anticipations of an extraordinary and alarming character, that St. John believed himself to be standing on the eve of a terrible crisis, and that the very time of the long-expected Advent had arrived. The Revelation, we think, is simply the prophetic delineation of this stupendous event. Amidst all its varied imagery, it is occupied principally with one grand subject—the sudden and speedy Advent of Messiah, and the phenomena which should accompany that astounding *parousia*. The first page utters the same warning as the last, and the last the same as the first. In no other writing of the New Testament is the event so graphically portrayed, or its imminent and terrific character so clearly and positively defined.

But whilst, in our opinion, the Apocalypse is simply a pictorial representation of the coming of Jesus at the end of the age then thought to be fast approaching, the history of the book shows nevertheless that a different view has been considered worthy of attention, and the Revelation has been interpreted of a series of historical events¹ which have happened in the world and in the Church from the days of St. John to our own times. The book, however, obstinately refuses to be so coerced. Sufficiently unintelligible before, it becomes under this treatment, “confusion worse confounded.” Interpretations far more wonderful than the problems they are meant to solve, and expositions of a far more marvellous character than the symbols of the sacred text, have made the exegetical history of this book the subject of sharp yet not unmerited ridicule. We desire to record our conviction that these, and like efforts which may yet be made to reconcile

¹ The *dernier ressort* of hard-pressed expositors is the postponement of these visions to an indefinite, and therefore unassailable future. Our sense of exegetical honesty precludes our having recourse to this convenient theory, and we deem it more in accordance with a supreme regard for truth to question the credit to be attached to the visions themselves, than to uphold their prophetic character by a system of interpretation requiring for its support a violation of the grammatical sense of words as well as a disregard of the first principles of hermeneutical science.

the visions of the Apocalypse with the events of history, are doomed to meet with disappointment, from the simple fact that the prolonged existence of the world itself was an idea the furthest removed from the writer's mind. Underlying not only the Apocalypse, but the whole literature of the New Testament, is an absorbing expectation of an immediately approaching end of all things which precludes prophetic forethought for the future. To interpret the book, therefore, of historical events occurring at great intervals from each other, is not only to do violence to the positive declarations of proximity of accomplishment with which the Apocalypse abounds, but to create a state of things not originally contemplated by the writer. Nothing perhaps but a religious reverence for so-called orthodox opinions could have postponed the catastrophe of which the Revelation is the principal exponent beyond the horizon of the writer's own times, and the result is the discomfiture of those who, afraid to follow the light of reason, endeavour to force its symbols into unhappy agreement with irrelevant facts. For ourselves, we dare not roam over the field of history in search of events which may be strained to fit the apocalyptic symbols, nor may we exhaust the period which has elapsed from its composition to the present time to discover a suitable fulfilment. If the prophecy cannot be interpreted, as a whole, of events which were expected to usher in the Messianic reign, our principle is defective and the right chord has not been struck; but if, on the other hand, an adequate explanation can be given within the required period, the conclusion may with difficulty be avoided that it is, in the main, correct. Encouraged by the hope that such an interpretation can be found, we shall examine this much-neglected and long-perverted book in a spirit of reverent yet careful criticism. We shall regard it not as an unintelligible mystery of which no solution can be given, but as a genuine work of great antiquity, reflecting an interesting phase of primitive expectation, and occupying a normal place in the literature of the

New Testament. To add to its demands upon our attention, it may be remembered that the Revelation was the text-book of the primitive Church, which for the first two or three centuries was essentially chiliastic. Considered from this point of view the study of the book is full of interest to those who would obtain correct notions of the primitive traditions of Palestine respecting the Messianic career of Jesus, and the opinions formed by the Jewish section of the Christian Church respecting him. In entering then upon the subject of apocalyptic interpretation, we are beginning at the beginning of Christianity. We contemplate the new religion in its earliest, yet most exclusive form. With its after-thoughts and metaphysical speculations as they developed themselves in the second century, we have nothing to do. Our task is to enquire honestly, and without regard to any foregone conclusion, "What the author of the book proposed to himself in the description of the visions, what events he himself supposed would happen, and what expectations the readers of the work in the age when it was written probably formed from it."

Our first inquiry will be devoted to the consideration of the date of the Apocalypse, and here, at the outset, we are met by a material difference of opinion. A tradition originated with Irenæus, which was propagated by successive ecclesiastical writers who seem, as in the case of Papias, to have relied on the "antiquity of the man," that the Apocalypse was seen by John in Patmos at the close of the reign of Domitian.¹ It appears, however, that this tradition was not universally accepted, and that an earlier period for the composition of the book was also entertained. Since the voice of antiquity is divided on this question, and all that can be done is to array the testimony of one Father against that of another, weighing the credit to be attached to each in the balance of our own judgment, it becomes necessary to have recourse to a different kind of proof. This, it is thought, may be furnished by the terms employed in the book itself; the

¹ *In Har.*, v. 20.

Apocalypse affording more decisive marks of the time of its composition than any other book of the New Testament.

I. The passage which fixes the date of the Apocalypse with the greatest clearness is Rev. xvii. 9-11, where the seven heads of the Beast are interpreted of the seven hills and the seven kings of Rome. "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth, and there are seven kings. Five have fallen, and one is, and the other has not yet come, and when he cometh he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." Following the order of the Roman emperors adopted by Josephus, according to whom Julius Cæsar is the first emperor, Augustus the second, Tiberius the third, and Caius the fourth (Jos. *Ant.*, xviii. 11, 2; vi. 10); and, what we deem of still greater importance, that of Pseudo-Esdras, who appears to have closely imitated the Johannic Apocalypse, and who makes Augustus the *second* emperor (2 Esdras xi. 13; xii. 15), we commence our list from the first who bore the name of Cæsar. This gives us Julius, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, as the five who had already fallen; the sixth, who "is,"¹ and who has not fallen like the five kings before mentioned, is Nero,² sup-

¹ It has been usual to interpret the king that "is" of Galba, who filled the Roman throne after the suicide of Nero when the book was written, but it does not appear to have been the intention of the author thereby to fix the date of the Apocalypse, and the suicidal act was not in his estimation *un fait accompli*, for Nero is healed of his deadly wound, and presently reappears as Antichrist. Add to this that Galba is not of the line of the Cæsars, to which the seven kings appear to be restricted, neither is he the sixth in order of succession to Claudius (*Sextus Nero*, S. Beat.); and to foist him into the place of his legitimate predecessor is to invert the historical sequence of the kings of Rome. This much-disputed clause may therefore be safely interpreted of Nero, "scotched but not killed," a view which harmonises with the mysterious character of the book and which is supported by numerous passages to the same effect. "The bottomless pit"—*ἄβυσσος*—from which the Beast ascends is not the abode of the dead but of demons and wicked men.

² The primary indication of this mysterious triplicity appears in chapter xiii. where Nero is presented under a threefold aspect. Firstly, as the

posed to be still living in spite of his deadly wound, and concealed among the Parthians, in Tartarus, or elsewhere. The seventh, "the other who is not yet come," is also Nero re-appearing as Antichrist; the "short space" during which he is to continue, agreeing with the three years and a half of the Antichristian tribulation. The "eighth," described by the same mysterious qualities as his predecessor, is the false Nero who personates the real emperor. The paradoxical statement that he is at once the "eighth," and "of the seven," makes it plain that he is identical with one of the seven Roman kings, while the condemnation expressed in the clause, "and goeth into perdition," points to that impostor, who equally with the Beast, is cast into the lake of fire.

This mysterious Trinity described as—

- { The Beast rising up out of the sea.
- { The Beast ascending out of the bottomless pit.
- { The Beast coming up out of the earth,

exhibits the great adversary under the threefold aspect of NERO, ANTICHRIST, and PSEUDO-NERO—an unholy imitation of Him "who liveth, and was dead, and behold, He is alive for evermore."

It is conceived, that the hitherto undiscovered theory of the False Nero, by connecting⁴ the "Beast coming up out of the earth," with the "eighth" king, goes a long way towards the

"head wounded to death whose deadly wound was healed;" secondly, as the Beast "who had power to continue forty and two months, whom all the world worshipped;" and thirdly, as the "Beast coming up out of the earth, who exercised all the power of the first beast before him." These three aspects under which Nero is presented are distinguished from each other by minute yet distinct characteristics. In the first, the specific feature is that of a wounded Beast whose wound does not prove fatal, for the Beast is "*as it were* wounded to death, and his deadly wound is healed." In the second, Antichrist is represented as "not yet come," and as about to "ascend out of the bottomless pit," also as continuing "a short space," or "forty and two months." In the third, it is asserted that the "eighth king" (Pseudo-Nero) is identical with the Beast that "was and is not" (Nero), and at the same time one of the "seven" kings of Rome.

solution of the Apocalyptic mystery. This interpretation confines the composition of the Apocalypse to a period shortly subsequent to the death of Nero. Nero died on the 9th of June, A.D. 68. The Apocalypse appears to have been written at the close of that or in the beginning of the following year, when the expectation of the return of the Beast (Nero) was at its greatest height. In asserting that it was written shortly after the death of Nero we have exhausted the principal evidence afforded by the book itself.

2. A second argument for the date may be gathered from the command given to St. John, to "measure the temple of God, the altar, and them that worship therein." That the temple here spoken of is an earthly temple, may be shown from the circumstance that it is contrasted (xi. 19) with "the temple of God in heaven;" and that the city which contained this temple is Jerusalem, is made certain from the fact that it is described as "the *holy* city," which is to be "trodden down by the Gentiles for forty and two months." The occupation, moreover, of the "holy city" by the Gentiles, who should tread it down for that apocalyptic term is yet future (xi. 2), and implies, that the destruction of Jerusalem had not yet taken place. It is plain then, that the book was written while the Jewish temple was yet standing; no such event being contemplated by the writer as the total destruction of the "beloved city," which was to be the seat of the millennial kingdom and "the camp of the saints," prior to the descent of the "holy city," New Jerusalem, which comes down from heaven. These considerations lead us to assign a period of composition for the Apocalypse shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Had the book been written subsequently to that event, it is improbable that a calamity of such magnitude should either have been passed over in silence, or have been symbolized by the fall of only "a tenth part" of the holy city. At the same time we think it probable that the composition of the Apocalypse may be deferred not only to a period subsequent to the breaking out

of the Jewish war, but even to that of the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem—a period in harmony with the spirit of the book itself, which is full of burning indignation against the invaders who were treading down the sacred soil of Judea.

3. The persecution (A.D. 64) from which the Church had recently emerged, and which, it was thought, would soon be repeated in an aggravated form, favours the supposition that the book was written subsequently, but by no long interval, to the death of Nero, and therefore within the term of the natural life of St. John. The author sets out with the statement that he, “their companion and brother in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” The Epistles to the Seven Churches abound with commendations for patience under the sufferings they had already experienced, and with exhortations to persevere under the still more fiery trials which awaited them. The Church of Ephesus is commended for its “patience,” and because it had not “fainted.” That of Smyrna is exhorted to “fear none of those things which it should suffer,” and to be “faithful unto death.” Pergamos is praised because it had not “denied the faith even in those days wherein Antipas, my faithful martyr, was slain among them.” Thyatira is lauded for its “faith and patience.” Sardis had “a few names which had not defiled their garments, and who should walk (with Christ) in white, for they are worthy.” It is promised to Philadelphia that, because it had kept the work of Christ’s patience, it should be “kept from the hour of temptation which shall (soon) come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” The warning is given to Laodicea “As many as I love I rebuke and chasten ; be zealous, therefore, and repent.” And the Epistles close respectively with a promise to “him that overcometh,” an evident allusion to the reward of martyrdom. This appeal from woes which had already fallen upon the Church to others of a still more

afflictive character which were soon about to follow, shows that the book was written shortly after a season of great and overwhelming trouble, such as that which marked the reign of Nero; whilst its object appears to have been to afford comfort and encouragement to the Church during the more severe yet homogeneous trials which should accompany his return as Antichrist.

4. Whilst apocalyptic ideas, either common to the period or borrowed from the Revelation, are found in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark,¹ the Gospel of St. Luke bears clear and decisive marks of previous acquaintance with the Johannic Revelation, showing that the latter preceded it in time of composition. Amongst these we may compare the announcement made by Moses and Elias at the Transfiguration, of our Lord's decease, "*which he should accomplish at Jerusalem*"² (a circumstance peculiar to St. Luke), with the death of one at least of the Two Witnesses who resemble them, in the great city (Jerusalem), "*where, also, their Lord was crucified.*"³ The clause indicative of delegated authority, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, *as my Father hath appointed unto me,*"⁴ with its apocalyptic parallel, "To him that overcometh will I give

¹ The latter-day anticipations recorded Matt. xxiv. xxv., Mark xiii., Luke xxi., correspond in a remarkable manner with the symbols of the Apocalypse, and may either have been drawn from that source, or may represent ideas common to the Jewish Christians of the first century. The wars, famines, and pestilences of the former bear a close resemblance to the calamities delineated under the first four seals, the persecution and slaughter of the disciples to the cry of the martyrs under the fifth: the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars, to similar phenomena described under the sixth: the preaching of the Gospel to every creature before the end should come, to the commission given to the angel to preach the everlasting Gospel to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people; and the escape of the Church into the mountains to the flight of the woman into the wilderness. Similarly the rising up of many false Christs and false prophets agrees with the qualities ascribed in the Revelation to the false prophet, whilst the great signs and wonders whereby they should "deceive even the very elect," are in harmony with the prodigies which the latter is said to perform.

² Luke ix. 31.

³ Rev. xi. 8.

⁴ Luke xxii. 29.

power over the nations, *even as I received of my Father.*"¹ The promise of Jesus to confess his servants "*before the angels of God,*"² with "I will confess his name before my Father, *and before his angels.*"³ Dives "*tormented in this flame*" in the presence of Abraham and Lazarus,⁴ with "they shall be *tormented with fire and brimstone* in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb."⁵ The promise to the penitent thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in (the) *Paradise,*"⁶ with that to the victor at Ephesus, "will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of *the Paradise of God.*"⁷ The names *written* in heaven,⁸ with the names *written* in the Book of Life.⁹ The *day-spring* from on high,¹⁰ with "the bright and *morning star.*"¹¹ The petition of the devils that Jesus would not send them into the *abyss*,¹² with the casting of Satan into the *abyss* for a thousand years.¹³ "*The time draweth near,*"¹⁴ with "*The time is at hand.*"¹⁵ "I am come to send *fire on the earth,*"¹⁶ with *fire cast on the earth* at the sounding of the first trumpet.¹⁷ "I beheld Satan, *as lightning* fall from heaven,"¹⁸ with "I saw *a star* fall from heaven unto the earth."¹⁹ The coming of the Son of Man at supper-time, and his standing and knocking at the door for admission,²⁰ with "Behold I stand at the door and knock," etc.²¹ God's own elect crying day and night unto him for speedy vengeance upon their persecutors,²² with the similar cry of the martyrs under the fifth seal.²³ *Jerusalem trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled,*²⁴ with *the holy city trodden down of the Gentiles forty and two months.*²⁵ The cry to the mountains and hills to fall on them

¹ Rev. ii. 26, 27.⁴ Luke xvi. 24.⁷ Rev. ii. 7.¹⁰ Luke i. 78.¹³ Rev. xx. 3.¹⁶ Luke xii. 49.¹⁹ Rev. ix. 1.²² Luke xviii. 7.² Luke xii. 8.⁵ Rev. xiv. 24.⁸ Luke x. 20.¹¹ Rev. xxii. 16.¹⁴ Luke xxi. 8.¹⁷ Rev. viii. 7.²⁰ Luke xii. 36, 37.²³ Rev. vi. 10.²⁵ Rev. xi. 2.³ Rev. iii. 5.⁶ Luke xxiii. 43.⁹ Rev. xiii. 8.¹² Luke viii. 31.¹⁵ Rev. i. 3 ; xxii. 10.¹⁸ Luke x. 18.²¹ Rev. iii. 20.²⁴ Luke xxi. 24.

and cover them,¹ with the corresponding cry addressed to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."² From a comparison of these passages, which are peculiar to the respective writings, it will be seen that the writer of the third Gospel must have been familiar with the Apocalypse; and that the composition of the former was subsequent to that of the latter. In confirmation of this position it may be observed that the "forty and two months" of the Revelation during which the Gentiles tread down the holy city, are replaced in the Gospel by "the times of the Gentiles;" the variation between the respective predictions serving to show that a more extended period was required by St. Luke, as the apocalyptic term of three years and an half had already expired. The second Petrine Epistle, as Sir Isaac Newton long ago observed, has the form of a continuous commentary on the Revelation; the mention of Babylon³ being also probably suggested by the mysterious name given to Rome in the Apocalypse. To this it may be added that apocryphal imitations of the Revelation ascribed to Peter, Paul, Cerinthus, and others, imply the prior and early existence of a true original which was highly prized and extensively circulated in primitive times.

5. The announcement of the sudden and speedy Advent of Messiah in the clouds of heaven, which is the central idea of the book, gives evidence of a period of composition prior to the disappointment of primitive Christian expectation. It will not be denied, except by the generation of the preposessed, that the Apocalypse is occupied with the delineation of a great catastrophe, the phenomena by which it is attended forming a series of brilliant variations upon the event itself. The proximity of this catastrophe is the Alpha and Omega which opens and shuts the book, and the interval between its announcement and final accomplishment is declared to be of the briefest kind. The Apocalypse sets out with a statement

¹ Rev. vi. 16.² Luke xxiii. 30.³ 1 Pet. v. 13.

expressed in clear and unequivocal terms, that it is "The Revelation¹ of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him to show unto his servants *things which must shortly come to pass*,"² and ends with the corresponding assertion, "The Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants *the things which must shortly be done*."³ The prologue announces in a few grand words the subject of the entire book, "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen :"⁴ the epilogue takes up a similar strain, and reiterates the rallying cry of the apostolic age, "*Behold I come quickly*."⁵ "*Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus*."⁶ The Apocalypse is prefaced with a promise with which the persons to whom it was sent were immediately concerned, "Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein, *for the time is at hand*,"⁷ it closes with the analogous benediction irrelevant except to the original hearers and readers of the book, "*Behold, I come quickly*; blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book."⁸ It bears on its title-page a salutation to "*The Seven Churches which are in Asia*," showing that it is occupied with a subject with which they were principally interested: it concludes with an assurance of similar import: "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things *in the churches*."⁹

The Apocalypse, as may be seen on the surface, demands an interpretation bound by the horizon¹⁰ of the writer's own

¹ ἀποκάλυψις.

² Rev. i. 1.

³ Rev. xxii. 6.

⁴ Rev. i. 7.

⁵ Rev. xxii. 12.

⁶ Rev. xxii. 20.

⁷ Rev. i. 3.

⁸ Rev. xxii. 7.

⁹ Rev. xxii. 16.

¹⁰ Dean Alford observes, "We cannot consent to believe the vision of the writer to have been bounded by the horizon of his own experience and personal hopes. We receive the book as being what it professes to be, a revelation from God, designed to show his servants things which must shortly (ἐν τάχει) come to pass . . . the ἐν τάχει confessedly contains among other periods, a period of a thousand years." "Confessedly," says

times, independently of the circumstance that such interpretation may impair the authority of the book, and place it in the same category with the Shepherd of Hermas, or the Ascension of Isaiah. If it is a revelation of "*things which must shortly be done*," it is not consistent with exegetical honesty to interpret these imminent things of events yet future. If the prophecy is to remain unsealed because "*the time is at hand*," it is not the part of critical candour to "shut up the words and seal the book unto the so-called time of the end."¹ If a necessity existed that the communication of events immediately impending should be made known *to the Churches*—the Seven Churches of Asia long since perished—it might be thought that these, and not the Church of the nineteenth century, would be principally concerned in such proximate disclosures. If a warning of a solemn nature was pronounced against those who should add unto or take away from the

the Dean! But we cannot honestly confess it. It is the Advent and the events preceding the millennial reign which are alone included in John's idea of speed. The thousand years of the Apocalypse are affirmed not of the short intervening space preceding the Advent, but of the subsequent reign of the martyrs with Messiah during the millennial period.

One must lament the laboured attempts of the same writer (*Gk. Test.* vol. i. p. 176) to prove that *ἐν τάχει* (quickly) is equivalent to *μακροθυμῶν* (long suffering). If we understand him "God's speedy time" (such is his phrase) means a very distant time: and in the same spirit, *γενεὰ* with him, means not a generation, but a race or family of people. This is, no doubt, convenient to modern hierophants who are embarrassed by Matt. xxiv. 24, and who, as it appears, are fain to shelter themselves under decanal authority; but Christian faith is not to be supported by harsh and untenable interpretation. Moreover, nothing is more evident in the writings of the New Testament generally, and especially in the Apocalypse, than that the Messianic Advent might be looked for at any hour of day or night. Every disciple was to *watch* for it. No tampering with separate words or separate texts can efface this broad fact. That clergymen of the Church of England, whose especial office it is to prepare the way of the Lord's Second Advent in the spirit and power of Elias should be sorely puzzled in the attempt to reconcile this fact with the teaching of the Church is not to be wondered at; but that they should endeavour to escape its force by reticence or by evasion, seems little less than a sacrifice of truth at the shrine of ecclesiastical fidelity.

¹ Dan. xii. 4.

words of the book of this prophecy, it might serve as a caution to interpreters not to let traditional theories override the natural sense of Scripture. This distinct and reiterated announcement of the immediate and stupendous coming of Messiah in the clouds of heaven, carries with it a strong indication of very early authorship. That a later period would have much softened the urgency of its phrases may be reasonably inferred from the Fourth Gospel. All who attribute that book to the Apostle John fix its date in his extreme old age; and it is a fact quite undeniable that this waiting and watching for the coming of the Messiah in clouds had vanished from its theology, in spite of the circumstance that John was one of the four disciples to whom Jesus is said to have communicated his prophetic utterances on the subject of the last things.¹

To sum up the case. The evidence for the date, although the decision of this question, even if it were attainable, might not materially affect the interpretation, points to a time shortly subsequent to the death of Nero as that of the composition of the Apocalypse. It is not that reference is continually made to the suicide of the tyrant (although a somewhat different report of that event seems to have extensively prevailed): nor that the Jewish temple was still standing (although evidently tottering to its fall); nor yet that the trials from which the Church had recently emerged correspond with the persecutions which marked the reign of Nero; neither is it again that reference is made to the book in the Gospel of St. Luke and other writings of the New Testament, nor that imitations of the Revelation ascribed to Peter, Paul, Cerinthus, and others, imply the prior existence of a true original, nor yet that the graphic delineation of the Advent of Messiah which exhausts the symbols of the book ties down its composition to a season when this expectation had attained its greatest height; but it is all of these combined which form a phalanx of evidence which it is hard, if not impossible,

¹ Mark xiii. 3.

for the human mind to resist. It is even questionable whether such a book could have been the production of a much later period than that we have assigned. With no other epoch does it seem so well to coincide. The whole world in abject terror at the unparalleled enormities of the monster who had just filled the Roman throne, and who was hourly expected to return as Antichrist¹—the impostor, the False Nero, personating the real Emperor at Cythnos—Asia and Achaia wild with fear as if Nero were coming—portentous omens of political convulsions, material nature sympathizing, as it were, with social change—“men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth : for the powers of heaven shall be shaken”—Jerusalem compassed with armies—nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom—famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places—“the day approaching” nearer and nearer, and the cry ever waxing louder and louder till it broke upon their ears like the crack of doom, “The Lord is at hand.” These were the unique and extraordinary circumstances which called forth the Apocalypse, forming together a combination of stirring incidents such as meet at no other period of this world’s history, and presenting so strong an argument for an early date as to make it difficult to conceive that any other could ever have commanded serious attention.

¹ See chapter vii.—Antichrist.

CHAPTER II.

AUTHORSHIP OF THE APOCALYPSE.

WITH partial and insignificant exceptions, the voice of antiquity ascribes the Apocalypse to the pen of the Apostle John. It will be therefore necessary to examine the testimony of the ancient Fathers in behalf of its genuineness ; and this, freely using the arguments of those who have preceded us in this important inquiry, we present in a condensed form to our readers.

In adducing the evidence furnished by the earliest periods in support of the Johannean authorship of the Apocalypse, we might set Papias first, who (in Eusebius) cites the first two Gospels and the Apocalypse. Clement of Rome, whose death is usually placed A.D. 100, gives a still earlier testimony, if the passage quoted by him is really taken from Rev. xxii. 12,—“Behold the Lord, and his reward is before him, to give to each according to his work.”¹ Justin Martyr, the contemporary of Papias, the time of whose death is assigned to A.D. 166, asserts in most explicit terms that John was the author : “Among us too (he says), a certain man named John, one of the Apostles of Christ, in a revelation made to him, prophesied that the believers in our Christ should fulfil a thousand years in Jerusalem, and that, after that, there would be the general and final resurrection and judgment of all men together.”² Melito, Bishop of Sardis, who flourished in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, and Apollonius, who lived in those of Commodus and Septimius Severus, “made use of witnesses from the Apocalypse of John.”³ The celebrated letter of the Christians of Vienne and Lyons to their brethren

¹ 1 *Ad Cor.* xxxiv.

² *Dial. cum Tryph.* c. 81.

³ Eus. *H. E.* iv. 24, v. 18.

in Asia,¹ giving an account of the persecutions they had undergone in the reign of Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 177), abounds with phrases quoted literally from the Apocalypse. The author of a MS., entitled "A Refutation of all Heresies," ascribed to Hippolytus, speaking of the Nicolaitanes, observes: "The disciples of this school doing despite to the Holy Spirit, John, in the Apocalypse, has charged them with fornication and eating meats offered to idols."² In his treatise, "De Antichristo,"³ Hippolytus asks, "Tell me, O blessed John, apostle and disciple, what thou hast seen and heard respecting Babylon." Irenæus, a hearer of Polycarp, gives a fanciful explanation of the number of the Beast, and declares that John, the disciple of the Lord, whom he further designates as he that leaned on the bosom of the Lord at supper, wrote the Apocalypse.⁴ Tertullian says that the apostle John in the Apocalypse describes the sword coming out of the mouth of the Lord, and that he (John) saw the heavenly city.⁵ Clement of Alexandria says of the faithful presbyter, that he shall sit in the four-and-twenty thrones as John declares in the Apocalypse.⁶ Origen declares that the same John who leaned on the bosom of Jesus wrote the Apocalypse.⁷ Citing the Apocalypse he calls it the work of John the son of Zebedee.⁸ "I believe (says the late lamented Mr. Tayler, from whose admirable work on the Fourth Gospel much of this evidence is abridged) there is not a passage in the writings of Origen in which he expresses a doubt of the apostolic origin of the Apocalypse." Victorinus, the earliest commentator on the Apocalypse whose work is now extant, not only declares that John was the writer, but that he saw it in the island of Patmos, where he was condemned to the mines by Cæsar Domitian.⁹ To this list may be added not only Ephrem Syrus,

¹ Eus. *H. E.* v. 1-3.

² *Ib.* vii. 36.

³ P. 67.

⁴ *Ib.* iv. xx. 11.

⁵ *Adv. Marcion.* xii. 14.

⁶ *Strom.* v. 13.

⁷ Eus. *H. E.* vi. 25.

⁸ *Comment in Evangel. Joann.* tom. i. 14.

⁹ *Bibl. M. Patr.* iii. p. 14.

who constantly quotes the Apocalypse, although by a singular and as yet unexplained circumstance it is omitted in the ancient Syriac version called the *Peschito*, but also Epiphanius, Athanasius, Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome. "Hardly one book of the New Testament (says Kirchofer) has such a list of historical witnesses marked by name in its behalf." "With the limited stock of early ecclesiastical literature that survives the wreck of time, we should despair (says Davidson) of proving the authenticity of any New Testament book by the help of ancient witnesses, if that of the Apocalypse be rejected." It must, we think, be admitted that the proofs now adduced in favour of the Johannean authorship of the Apocalypse are of great weight, and in the opinion of those who are disposed to lay stress on the argument from antiquity, might seem to be sufficient. The difficulty, however, of weighing the credit to be attached to the testimony of the ancient Fathers, makes it desirable not to rest the case solely upon these. Proofs of a different yet not less convincing kind, furnished by a critical examination of the book itself, are at hand to confirm our position; internal evidence agreeing with ecclesiastical tradition in assigning its composition to the Apostle John.

1. Our first argument in support of a Johannean authorship for the Apocalypse is taken from the frequent and prominent mention of St. John's own name¹—a circumstance which distinguishes the writer of the Apocalypse from the author of the Fourth Gospel, in which the name of John is not mentioned. The simplicity, moreover, with which the writer asserts the truthfulness of his testimony² does not look like imposture, and contrasts favourably with the indirectness employed by the latter.³ The Epistles to the Seven Churches further show that the writer was held in respect by the Christians of proconsular Asia, and fit in with the tradition of St. John's long residence and eventual decease at Ephesus, whilst the

¹ Rev. i. 1, 4, 9; xxii. 8.

² Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

³ John xix. 35; xxi. 24.

association of his name with "The isle which is called Patmos," has special application to the history of John alone. It is also difficult to imagine any one of less dignity than an Apostle to write with so authoritative an air to the Seven Churches; or that, if there had been a John so eminent, ecclesiastical tradition would have passed him by. The presbyter (E. V. "elder"), who is the author of the second and third Epistles which bear the name of John, and who is supposed by some to be also the author of the Fourth Gospel, does not appear to have been invested with so high an office; for he himself seems to have been excommunicated by an unknown Diotrephes.¹ To this it may be added that there is no reliable evidence (if we except that of Dionysius of Alexandria, A.D. 250) that another John wrote the Apocalypse; no other person of that name holding a prominent position at that time among the Churches of lesser Asia.

2. The character of the book may also be said to harmonise with the idiosyncrasy of the son of Zebedee. The author of the Apocalypse, it has been observed, exhibits none of the tenderness, not even in his letters to the Churches, which characterizes the author of the Gospel and the Johannean Epistles; the endearing terms "beloved" and "little children," so frequent in the latter, never occurring in the former. It is known that the sons of Zebedee were of a fiery and impetuous temperament—sons of rage, or thunder—sternly forbidding those that cast out devils in the name of Jesus, and desirous of calling down fire from heaven upon the Samaritan village which refused to receive him. They are, moreover, narrow and Judaic, seeking for themselves, at the instigation of their mother Salome, the foremost places in the kingdom then thought to be approaching, and requesting to sit one on the right hand and the other on the left hand in their Master's glory—characteristics which agree with the exclusive spirit manifested in the Apocalypse. Further, they are "unlettered and ignorant men,"² a circumstance which receives confirma-

3 John 9.

² Acts. iv. 13.

tion from the ungrammatical style of the Apocalypse, as well as from its abundant Hebraisms, which show that the writer had only lately come from Judea. In a MS. of the twelfth century the Revelation is entitled, "The Apocalypse of the holy and most glorious Apostle and Evangelist, the beloved *Virgin*¹ who lay in the bosom (of Jesus), John the Divine"—an idea corresponding with Rev. xiv. 4, where the 144,000 who are not defiled with women, and who follow the Lamb, are called "*virgins*." To this it may be added that his career subsequent to the death of Christ gives strong indication that he took a prominent part in establishing the Jewish section of the Church both at Jerusalem and at Ephesus, in which latter place his teaching had been preceded by the more liberal doctrine of Paul.² As an instance of the impetuosity of character which marked even the later years of the Apostle, Irenæus relates that John, going into a bath and seeing Cerinthus there, hastened out of it, fearful lest the building should fall and crush him with the heretic. Clement also tells the tale of his pursuing the robber whom he had formerly baptised, and winning him back to repentance. The general view of John's character, as perhaps almost universally conceded by Christians, is well summed up by an orthodox writer. "The truest thought that we can attain to is that he was the disciple whom Jesus loved,³ returning that love with a deep, absorbing, unwavering devotion. One aspect of that feeling is seen in the zeal for his Master's glory, the burning indignation against all that seemed to outrage it, which runs with its fiery gleam through his whole life, and makes him, from first to last, one of the Sons of Thunder. To him more than to any other disciple there is no neutrality between Christ and Antichrist. The spirit of such a man is intolerant of compromises and concessions."⁴

3. The Judaic mould in which the Revelation is cast would also seem to establish a Johannean authorship. To use the

¹ παρθένος.

² Rev. ii. 2.

³ ὁ πιστῆθιος.

⁴ Smith's *Bibl. Dictionary*.

words of an able writer in the *Westminster Review* for July, 1868, "Its eschatology, its demonology, its Kabbalistical arithmetic, its Hebraistic construction, its Rabbinic mode of expression, its Christology, its doctrine of an immediate advent—(a doctrine held by apostles, evangelists, and Fathers for more than a century after the death of Jesus)—all testify to its Jewish origin, and to the Jewish nature of its conceptions." Regarding with M. Renan the Apocalypse as one of the earliest books of the New Testament, we are prepared to find it replete with primitive Messianic expectations, and in this we certainly are not disappointed. At the period of its composition the time for the promised Advent had not expired, although it was fast drawing to a close, the consummation of all things was hourly awaited, and heaven and earth seemed alike to be giving tokens of the impending change. At this juncture the writer of this mysterious book, under the influence of strong national feeling, traces out the picture of the coming age, opens the seals of the book of fate, blows the trumpets which sound the approaching catastrophe, and pours out the vials of wrath upon the earth. Holding fast to the Jewish theory of a war and triumph of Messiah, he summons the white-robed armies of heaven to contend with the Beast and his armies at the battle of that great day of God Almighty, treads the winepress of Divine wrath till blood gushes out of it even unto the horse bridles, and builds the superb kingdom of Messiah upon the shattered ruins of that of Antichrist. These ideas, it will be observed, are strongly marked with a Jewish tinge, and have their foundation in that misplaced expectation of Messianic deliverance, which once and again prepared the way for the downfall of the favoured people; their hope of national pre-eminence which no misfortunes were dark enough to quench, proving but too often the source of national disappointment. Indeed, the Apocalypse of the New Testament is but the echo of that of the Old, recast into a Christian shape. As the Jewish prophet conceived of a kingdom of saints which should prevail over

the kingdoms of the heathen world, so does the Christian seer behold the kingdom of this world become that of our Lord and of his Christ. As the former saw in visions of the night a Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days, so the latter depicts the advent of Messiah with power and great glory. As the former imagined the accompanying events of a resurrection and a judgment, so the latter describes the millennial reign and the universal sentence of mankind. As the former drew the appalling picture of the Syrian tyrant, so the latter delineates that of the Roman persecutor. As the former prescribed the duration of the pre-Christian tribulation, so the latter defines that of the Antichristian period. As the one consigned Antiochus Epiphanes to the burning flame, so the other drags down the Beast and the False Prophet to perdition,—the characteristic features of the respective representations being impressed by the Jewish mould in which they are cast.

To sum up : From the fact that the writer of the Apocalypse gives his own name ; from the mention of the island of Patmos, a spot associated in an especial manner with the history of the Apostle ; from the letters addressed to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor suggestive of the prominent position held by St. John at Ephesus ; from the impetuous disposition manifested by the writer corresponding with the idiosyncrasy of the beloved disciple, and from the Judaic mould in which the book is cast, it may be inferred that the author—being certainly a very eminent and very early John—is John, the son of Zebedee. Hence, from whichever side we take up the argument ; whether, with our older divines we lay great stress on the testimony of Fathers ; or, with our modern severe and sceptical critics, we look to the facts of the book and the internal indications of age and authorship, we are brought to the same conclusion. Taking the two arguments together—and they are far weightier than we can ordinarily expect in inquiries where so little of contemporary literature assists us, we can conceive of no writer who would have been more

likely to have been its author than the ambitious and fiery disciple who coveted the first place and the highest seat in his Master's kingdom.

This opinion is confirmed by the circumstance that a separate authorship must be assigned to the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel ; and that, if only one of the two books is to have John for its author, this may be affirmed with more probability of the Revelation than of the Fourth Gospel.¹ It will be observed that, in appropriating the ideas and almost the very words of the Apocalypse, St. Luke, with some unimportant yet significant variations, employs them in the sense primarily used by the writer. On the other hand the writer of the Fourth Gospel sees a different sense—a thing which is natural to different minds, but very rare and hard to believe with the same mind. However common it might be for one writer to appropriate the thoughts of another, it is difficult to understand that the same writer could so completely put on a new mind as to reverse his own tendencies and peculiarities. This, however, is what the writer of the Fourth Gospel has done with regard to the Apocalypse. In spite of external agreement in certain words and phrases, he has refined and as it were purified the features of the Revelation. It is, in fact, a kind of “sublimated” Apocalypse, in which the more literal anticipations of a primitive period are softened into a spiritual shape. Like the earlier book, it has a Lamb of God and a Word of God ; the former under a different Greek noun, and the latter under a different theological conception. Like the earlier book it has a first resurrection and a judgment ; the former changed from a literal resurrection of martyred saints into a passing from death unto

¹ “Neither Papias, who carefully sought out all that Apostles or apostolic men had related regarding the life of Christ,—nor Polycarp, who was himself a disciple of the Apostle John,—nor Barnabas, nor Clement of Rome,—in their epistles,—nor lastly, Ignatius (in his genuine writings),—make any mention of or allusion to this Gospel. So that in the most ancient circle of ecclesiastical testimony, it appears to be unknown or not recognized.”—Dean Alford's Greek Testament, *Prolegomena*, vol. i. p. 66.

spiritual life,¹ and the latter from a judgment of the literally dead into a spiritual sentence pronounced by the Son of Man.² Like the earlier book, it has a casting out and a punishment of Satan; the former changed from an ejection from heaven by Michael and his angels to that of a moral defeat on earth,³ and the latter from the binding of Satan for a thousand years into a condemnation already executed upon the prince of this world.⁴ Like the earlier book, it has an advent of the Messianic reign: the former changed from a coming in the clouds of heaven to that of another Comforter, such as Christ had already been,⁵ and the latter from the reign of the saints in the New Jerusalem to a kingdom which is not of earth.⁶ Like the earlier book, it has a home and a reward of the saints; the former changed from the city resplendent with gold and pearls into many mansions of the Father's house, and the latter from a carnal millennium into that eternal life which consists in a knowledge of the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.⁷ Like the earlier book, it abounds in sharp contrasts; not between the Beast and the Lamb, the Whore and the Bride, the False Prophet and the two Christian Prophets, the Old and the New Jerusalem, but between the mystical ideas of life and death, flesh and spirit, light and darkness, from beneath and from above, of this world and not of this world.

To this difference of general conception may be added that of particular words and phrases which are used in a separate and often antagonistic sense by the respective writers. In the former, Jesus is "The Prince of the Kings of the earth,"⁸ the Jewish Messiah; in the latter, Messiah is the Divine teacher who will tell us all things.⁹ In the former, Messiah *receives power over the nations* to rule them with a rod of iron;¹⁰ in the latter, Jesus *receives power over all flesh* to give unto them eternal life.¹¹ In the former, *every eye shall see him* coming

¹ John v. 24.² John v. 22, 25.³ John xii. 31.⁴ John xvi. 11⁵ John xv. 26.⁶ John xviii. 36.⁷ John xiv. 2; xvii. 3⁸ Rev. i. 5.⁹ John iv. 25.¹⁰ Rev. ii. 26, 27.¹¹ John xvii. 2.

in the clouds of heaven ;¹ in the latter, *every one that seeth the Son* and believeth on him shall have everlasting life.² In the former, *the Two Witnesses*, who exercise their office in the spirit and power of Elias, are slain at Jerusalem by the Beast which ascended out of the bottomless pit ;³ in the latter Jesus "receiveth not testimony from men," but *bears witness* of himself, and the Father that hath sent him also *bears witness* of him.⁴ In the former, the Lamb slain is the Redeemer of the *elect* ;⁵ in the latter, Jesus is "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of *the world*."⁶ In the former St. John sees "*heaven opened*" at the coming of Messiah with his celestial armies ;⁷ in the latter, *the heaven is opened* that angels may ascend and descend upon the Son of Man.⁸ In the former, the words "*Come and see*" are employed to point out the champion going forth conquering and to conquer ;⁹ in the latter, the same words are used to indicate the place where Jesus dwelt.¹⁰ In the former, *they who pierced him* look upon Messiah as he comes with the clouds of heaven ;¹¹ in the latter, *they who pierced him* look upon Jesus as he hangs upon the cross.¹² In the former, the water of life, of which he that is athirst is invited *by the Spirit* to take freely,¹³ is "the pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" ;¹⁴ in the latter, a similar invitation to him that is athirst is answered by "rivers of living water flowing out of the belly of the believer," explained *of the Spirit* which they that believe on Jesus should receive.¹⁵ In the former, the elect 144,000 bear *his Father's name* on their foreheads, while the apostates are marked with the *name of the beast* ;¹⁶ in the latter, Jesus comes in *his Father's name* and the Jews receive him not, but if *another should come*

¹ Rev. i. 7.² John vi. 40.³ Rev. xi. 7, 8.⁴ John v. 34, 36 ; viii. 17, 18.⁵ Rev. v. 9.⁶ John i. 29.⁷ Rev. xix. 11.⁸ John i. 51.⁹ Rev. vi. 1.¹⁰ John i. 39, 46.¹¹ Rev. i. 7.¹² John xix. 37.¹³ Rev. xxii. 17.¹⁴ Rev. xxii. 1.¹⁵ John vii. 37, 39.¹⁶ Rev. xiv. 1 ; xiii 17.

in his own name, him they will receive.¹ In the former, the 144,000, of *all the tribes of the children of Israel* "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth;"² in the latter, it is said with great significance, "Behold *the world* is gone after him."³ In the former, Jews take precedence of Gentiles, form a permanent aristocracy in the New Jerusalem, stand upon Mount Sion, and sing the new song which no man could learn but the 144,000 which were redeemed from the earth;⁴ in the latter, Gentiles take precedence of Jews, and worship God, who is a spirit, neither in Jerusalem nor upon Mount Gerizim.⁵ In the former, Paganism, symbolised by Nero and Babylon, Gog and Magog, is the giant adversary of Christianity; in the latter, the resistance proceeds from Judaism, and the Jews are the habitual opponents of Jesus. In the former, they who say they are Jews, and are not, *but do lie*, are of the synagogue of *Satan*;⁶ in the latter, the Jews themselves are *the children of the devil and liars*.⁷ In the former, Jesus is "The root and offspring of David," who has "The Key of David;"⁸ in the latter, the Messianic title "Son of David," common to the Synoptics, is unknown. In the former, the saved enter in *through the gates* into the celestial city;⁹ in the latter, Jesus is the spiritual *door* of the sheep.¹⁰ In the former, Messiah treads the *winepress* of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God;¹¹ in the latter, Jesus is the true *vine*, and his Father is the husbandman.¹² In the former, the exclamation, "*It is done*," is significant of the consummation introduced at the pouring out of the Seventh Vial;¹³ in the latter, the death-cry, "*It is finished*," is put into the mouth of Jesus on the cross. It is chiefly, however, in doctrinal points that the divergence is most apparent, for whilst the Jesus of the Apocalypse realizes most perfectly the Judaical type, the Jesus of the

¹ John v. 43.² Rev. xiv. 4.³ John xii. 19.⁴ Rev. xiv. 1, 3.⁵ John iv. 21.⁶ Rev. ii. 9; iii. 9.⁷ John viii. 44, 55.⁸ Rev. iii. 7; xxii. 16.⁹ Rev. xxii. 14.¹⁰ John x. 7, 9.¹¹ Rev. xiv. 19, xix. 15.¹² John xv. 1.¹³ Rev. xvi. 17.

Fourth Gospel approaches more nearly to the conception of our own times. The tendencies of the two writings may fairly be called the antipodes of theology. They represent the very poles of Christian thought and speculation, and that one man should simultaneously hold both, or change after middle life from one phase of thought to the other, may seem morally impossible.

Moreover, the style and subject of the respective books are as opposite as the most opposite things, creating a literary gulf between the Galilean Sibyl and the Jewish Plato which it is hard to bridge over. The Revelation, it has been said, is the most, and the Gospel the least Jewish of all the books of the New Testament. The Revelation deals with the literal and the objective, the Gospel with the mystic and the spiritual. The Revelation is narrow and Judaic ; the Gospel, Catholic and more comprehensive than even the Epistles of Paul. The characteristic features of the Revelation are action and impetuosity ; in the Gospel, contemplation and serenity reign supreme. The imaginative and visionary conceptions of the former book are, moreover, completely at variance with the calm and mystical thoughts expressed in the latter. In the Apocalypse, Messiah is the external conqueror of his enemies ; the Gospel contends for spiritual victories, and the reign of Jesus in the heart. In the former, the kingdom of Messiah arrives suddenly amidst the convulsions of the universe and terrors of the human race ; in the latter, it is established gradually by the secret operation of Divine grace in the soul. In the former, portentous signs falling on earth, and sea, and sky, and river, swarms of fiery locusts issuing from the bottomless pit, and myriads of unearthly horsemen from beyond the Euphrates, usher in the great and terrible day of the Lord ; in the latter, a mysterious silence is preserved on the subject of the last things. In the Apocalypse, angels preside over natural phenomena, they restrain the winds, or "turn the sea into blood, or darken the moon, or stand in the sun, or shake the stars out of the sky ;" in the Gospel, their employment

is rare and uncommon. The Gospel betrays an acquaintance with Alexandrine, and especially Philonic philosophy, of which there is not a trace in the Apocalypse. It has also a "Valentinian vocabulary—*Life, Grace, Truth, Only begotten, Fulness*"—terms wholly unknown to the latter. The crude, uncouth, ungrammatical, often scarcely intelligible syntax of the Revelation stands out, moreover, in marked contrast to the easy, fluent, if not always classical, Greek of the Fourth Gospel. The Hebraisms of the former book have altogether disappeared from the latter, as well as its Jewish modes of thought and expression. Under these circumstances it is hard to believe that the same person could have been the author of both writings. Supposing, however, that such a literary phenomenon were possible, how is it, it may be asked, that there are no signs of antagonism between the old and the new ideas of the writer? In the case of St. Paul, we know that his conversion from Judaism to Christianity was attended with a complete inversion of his former sentiments, and this he presses constantly upon the minds of his readers. On the other hand, the writer of the Fourth Gospel makes no reference to a previous state of thought, and appears never to have entertained views different from those he enunciates. The composition of the Gospel after the Apocalypse has been described as something "psychologically impossible." The difference between poetry and prose, the fire of youth and the chill of age, or between sentiments incident to Galilean associations and the refined speculations of a Greek city, might indeed account for some variety of style and diction, but no merely external circumstances can induce variety of theological conception. "That one who at the end of middle age still wrote the awkward and faulty Greek of the Revelation should as an old man have adopted the flowing style of the Gospel, is difficult to understand; but that in extreme old age he should have been inclined and able to identify himself with a novel mode of thought, and one so far removed from the range of his ideas hitherto, is a supposition devoid of the

slightest semblance of probability." We are brought, therefore, to the conclusion that a separate authorship must be assigned to these distinct and dissimilar writings; ecclesiastical tradition agreeing with internal evidence in favour of a Johannean authorship for the Apocalypse, while it is less positive in assigning the Fourth Gospel¹ to the same writer. "No result of modern criticism stands more firmly than this: If the Apostle wrote the Fourth Gospel and the Epistles which bear his name, he did not write the Apocalypse; or, if the Apocalypse be his work, he is not the author of the other writings."²

¹ See Appendix.

² The inversion of ideas which we have traced between the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel is also apparent between the Apocalypse and the First Epistle of John. In that Epistle Antichrist no longer assumes the form of the Neronic beast (Rev. xvii. 16), but that of heretical teachers who "deny the Father and the Son" (1 John ii. 22; iv. 1, 3). The False Prophet is not an individual who procures homage for the statue of Nero (Rev. xiii. 14), but "many false prophets who are gone out into the world" (1 John iv. 1). The spirits which are "not of God" are not spirits of devils working miracles, who gather the kings of the whole world to the battle of Armageddon (Rev. xvi. 14), but "every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus is come in the flesh" (1 John iv. 3).

CHAPTER III.

THE EPISTLES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES.

PROLOGUE.

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass ; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John : Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein : for the time is at hand."—Rev. i. 1-3.

THE Revelation,¹ not of St. John the Divine, but of Jesus Christ, a title denoting its lofty scope and origin, is prefaced by the declaration that it was vouchsafed to Jesus by God himself for the purpose of enlightening the Christian Church on the subject of the immediate future. This unveiling of "things which must surely come to pass," the knowledge of which had hitherto been not in his own but in his Father's power,² is transmitted by an angel³ to St. John, a faithful servant and martyr of Jesus, and therefore worthy to record whatsoever things he saw in these visions. An especial blessing is then promised to the public reader⁴ of this prophecy, as well as to those who should hear and keep its sayings ; a blessing emphatically repeated at the close⁵ of the book, and for the same reason, "*For the time is at hand*,"—the proximity of the event being adduced by the writer as the principal motive for securing attention to the message he delivers.

SALUTATION.

"John to the seven churches which are in Asia : Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come ; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne ; and from Jesus

¹ ἀποκάλυψις.

² Acts i. 7 ; 1 Tim. vi. 15 ; Matt. xxiv. 36 ; Mark xiii. 32.

³ Rev. xxii. 6.

⁴ ὁ ἀναγνώσκων.

⁵ Rev. xxii. 7.

Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father ; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Behold, he cometh with clouds ; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him ; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.”—Rev. i. 4-7.

The salutation of the writer, who distinctly announces himself by the name of John, follows the prologue. In common with other apostolical writings, it is coupled with a benediction which proceeds from “ Him which is, and which was, and which is to come,” the Almighty and eternally living God : from the “ seven spirits which are before His throne ”—the seven presence angels¹; and from “ Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.” Led away by an irresistible impulse at the mention of this last and adorable name, which appears to have had the effect of bringing before the imagination of the writer the brilliant hopes with which it was associated, he bursts forth into one of those sublime ejaculations which are common to the book, and exclaims with up-turned gaze, as if he actually saw the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, “ Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen ”—the all-absorbing expectation which had taken possession of his soul having almost the shape of a present and visible reality.

JOHN IN PATMOS.

I, John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last : and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia ; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos,

¹ Zech. iii. 9 ; iv. 10 ; Tobit xii. 15.

and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.—Rev. i. 9–20.

The scene now opens with John in Patmos, a small and narrow island in the Ægean Sea, where he appears to have been exiled in the reign of Nero, "for the word of God (the public preaching of the Gospel) and the testimony of Jesus Christ." "In this ocean solitude he seems to have limned out, under the influence of a strong religious and poetic transport, a dim outline of an imagined history of the immediate future of the world, and to have given it, apparently after his exile had terminated, the literary completeness which characterizes the Johannic Revelation." He tells us that he was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (the well-known first day of the week), and heard behind him a great voice as of a trumpet commanding him to write the things which he saw, the things which are, and the things which are about to be after these¹ ("which must shortly come to pass here-

¹ It has been thought that a threefold division of apocalyptic subjects is contained in the words, "*Scribe quæ vidisti, et quæ sunt, et quæ post hæc sunt futura*" (Beza), separating the visions into the past, the present, and the future—"the things which he had seen," comprising the appearing of the glorified Jesus to the seer in Patmos, and the sublime vision of the Unnamed One seated on his heavenly throne: "the things which

after," Sinaitic MS.), to the Seven Churches of proconsular Asia. Turning to perceive the voice which was speaking to him, he beholds seven golden candlesticks, explained in the book itself of the Seven Churches, and in the midst of the golden candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man. As might naturally be expected from the title here given to Jesus, the imagery is closely borrowed from that ancient prophet whose writings have given distinct shape to the Messianic ideas of the Apocalypse; the garment down to the foot and the golden girdle corresponding with the angelophany of Daniel x. 5: the head and hairs like wool and white as snow, agreeing with the portraiture of the Ancient of Days:¹ the eyes like a flame of fire, denoting penetration, with the "lamps of fire" of Daniel x. 6: the feet like unto chalcidolibanus, as if they had been burnt in a furnace, with the "feet like in colour to polished brass" of the same prophet;² and the voice, loud and

are," contained in the first book of fate in the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne, including events taking place under the personal observation of the writer; and "*the things which shall be hereafter*," described in the second book of fate of chapter x, evidently as yet unknown and future. No substantial argument, however, in support of a system of historical interpretation extending over long periods can be built upon the words translated "*hereafter*," which are invariably used in this book, not of things indefinitely future, but of *things immediately consequent upon others which had preceded*. In order to place this point beyond the reach of controversy it will be necessary to examine those passages in which the words in question are used in this sense. In Rev. iv. 1, the words translated "*After this*," are in the end of the verse rendered "*Hereafter*," where no futurity can be claimed for the latter phrase beyond that given to the former; so in Rev. vii. 9, and ix. 12, the words translated "*After this*," and "*hereafter*," are used of events immediately consecutive. When it is said of Satan, Rev. xx. 3, that "*After this* he must be loosed a little season, no long interval is expected to elapse between the expiration of the thousand years and his release, and the clause itself, "Things which must be *hereafter*," Rev. iv. 1, is explained by its equivalent, "Things which must *shortly be done*," Rev. xxii. 6. Added to this the same events are treated of in the first as well as in the last chapters of the Apocalypse, which could scarcely have been the case had it been a prophetic history of the Church from the days of Nero to those of Louis Napoleon.

¹ Dan. vii. 9.

² Dan. x. 6.

terrible as the sound of many waters or a great multitude,¹ with "the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude."² Besides those taken from the Book of Daniel, other features are added of a more strictly Christian shape, such as the seven stars in his right hand, expressive of the protection afforded to the Seven Churches; the two-edged sword out of his mouth symbolising the vengeance with which Messiah should smite the nations;³ and his countenance as the sun shining in its strength, indicative of his glorious aspect, "white as the light," and "above the brightness of the sun," as He is said to have revealed himself at the transfiguration. Overwhelmed by the splendour of this unearthly apparition, the disciple whose privilege it was to lie close to the breast of his beloved Master, falls, like his Danielic prototype, at his feet as dead, unable to endure the "excellent glory," and needing the gracious reassurance, "Fear not: I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth and was dead: and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen: and have the keys of hell and of death."

It will be remembered that this is seen *in vision*: "in the Spirit."⁴ The seer is not describing objective realities which presented themselves to his waking senses, but scenes which floated through his transported imagination as, rapt in prophetic gaze, he brooded over the present sorrows and the future trials of the Church. The picture which is here so graphically delineated is no more to be taken literally than the seven candlesticks and the seven stars in the right hand of the appearing Christ, but is stamped with the vagueness common to visions in general. It adds to the unreality of the vision under consideration that the writer has invested a subject which demanded original treatment with imagery borrowed from the Book of Daniel, as he takes the irruption of

¹ Rev. xix. 6.² Dan. x. 6.³ Rev. xix. 15.⁴ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι, i.e., under ecstatic influence, and not in the understanding, ἐν τῷ νοῷ.

the armies of Gog and Magog¹ from Ezekiel. Under these circumstances, it would be unreasonable to expect a strict regard for historical accuracy. Exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, and caught up into the third heaven in the plenitude of prophetic ecstasy, the writer of the Apocalypse may be regarded not so much as a narrator of real and sensible fact, as a transcendental idealist lifted up in the spirit above mundane things, and continually hearing behind him "a great voice as of a trumpet talking with him"; while the mysterious disclosures which he records do not so much resemble the outpourings of ordinary inspiration as the words which he had not the power of uttering,² mentioned by St. Paul. And it is only when viewed in this light that the Revelation divests itself of the charge of fraudulent deception, and assumes the character of a sincere although fanciful delineation of events which St. John, in common perhaps with most of his countrymen, supposed to be at hand; sharing indeed the imperfection consequent upon the non-fulfilment of its sublime visions, yet maintaining a dignified attitude as the expression of the latter-day anticipations of the primitive Church.

THE EPISTLES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES.

The epistles to the Seven Churches are prefaced by some characteristic appellative of Messiah as He appeared to John in Patmos, and are addressed not so much perhaps to particular Churches as to the universal Church of that period, symbolised by the number "seven,"—the sacred number being employed partly because it is one of perfection, and partly because everything in this book is done by sevens.³ In the

¹ Rev. xx. 8.

² ἄρρητα ῥήματα.

³ We may instance the seven candlesticks, the seven stars, the seven epistles, seals, trumpets, vials, thunders and plagues, the seven lamps of fire which are the seven spirits of God, the seven heads and crowns of the dragon, the seven mountains, and the seven kings. Not to insist upon what some have thought to be a seven-fold arrangement of the book

epistle to the Church at Ephesus, Christ is described as, "He that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks."¹ In that to Smyrna, as, "The first and the last, which was dead and is alive."² To Pergamos, as, "He that hath the sharp sword with two edges."³ To Thyatira, as, "The Son of God who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass."⁴ To Sardis, as, "He that hath the seven spirits of God and the seven stars."⁵ To Philadelphia, as, "He that is holy and He that is true."⁶ To Laodicea, as, "The Amen: the faithful and true witness,⁷ the beginning of the creation of God."

It is also remarkable that a warning of the immediate advent of Christ is given to each of the Seven Churches. To Ephesus it is said, "I will come unto thee quickly."⁸ To Smyrna, "I will give thee a crown of life."⁹ To Pergamos, "I will come unto thee quickly."¹⁰ To Thyatira, "Hold fast till I come."¹¹ To Sardis, "I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."¹² To Philadelphia, "Behold, I come quickly."¹³ To Laodicea, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock."¹⁴

It is, moreover, worthy of notice that the symbols employed in the epistles to the Churches recur in the latter portions of the book. To the Church of Ephesus it is said, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."¹⁵ To Smyrna, "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."¹⁶ To Perga-

itself, it descends even to the consideration of the half of this mystical number (Rev. xii. 14), and the millennium represents the rest of a seventh day of a thousand years, after the six thousand years in which all things shall be accomplished are completed (S. Barn. Epist. xii. 4-6). To this it may be added that even Antichrist is "of the seven," and that the Lamb has "seven horns, and seven eyes."

¹ Cf. i. 12, 13. ² Cf. i. 17, 18.

³ Cf. i. 16. ⁴ Cf. i. 14, 15.

⁵ Cf. i. 16.

⁶ Cf. i. 5.

⁷ Cf. i. 5.

⁸ Rev. ii. 5.

⁹ Rev. ii. 10.

¹⁰ Rev. ii. 16.

¹¹ Rev. ii. 25.

¹² Rev. iii. 3.

¹³ Rev. iii. 11.

¹⁴ Rev. iii. 20.

¹⁵ Cf. xxii. 6.

¹⁶ Cf. xx. 6, 14.

mos, "To him that overcometh will I give a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."¹ To Thyatira, "He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations."² To Sardis, "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life."³ To Philadelphia, "He that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out ; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God ; and my new name."⁴ To Laodicea, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne"⁵—the clause, "He that overcometh," used in all these passages, suggesting the idea of martyrdom, and that the reward promised to the victor is not so much a recompense for patient endurance under past trials, as for the exercise of the same qualities under the new and more terrible conflict which awaited the Church. If we add to this that a command is given to St. John to write to the angel, probably the guardian angel, of every Church, that in each epistle something for, and something against, is invariably introduced, that each is prefaced by the words, "I know thy works," and ends with a formula similar to that employed in the Gospels, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches ;" it will, perhaps, be admitted that the epistles exhibit traces of carefulness and design as well as of uniformity and agreement with the rest of the book. The Revelation, moreover, as the salutation indicates, is addressed to the Seven Churches which are in Asia ; and ends, as it began, with a solemn assurance that its disclosures affect them,⁶ and not the Churches of later times. It is, therefore, impossible to eliminate these encyclical letters from the context which precedes and follows them, or to prove that

¹ Cf. xxii. 4.² Cf. xxi. 7, 24.

Cf. xxi. 27, xix. 14.

⁴ Cf. xxi. 10,⁵ Cf. xx. 4,⁶ Rev. xxii. 16.

they relate to subjects distinct from those which are enunciated in later portions of the book.

EPHESUS.

“Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write ; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks ; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil : and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars : and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works ; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches ; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”—Rev. ii. 1–7.

The epistle to the Church at Ephesus may be divided, like the rest, into the two principal heads of something for and something against. It is first commended for its “works and labour and patience,” qualities expressive of faithful diligence as well as of earnest expectation. It had also difficulties peculiar to itself, for it had “tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and had found them liars.” It is hard to conceive to whom these accusations refer, unless they are directed against St. Paul and his fellow-labourers, who appear to have come into violent collision with the ultra-Jewish section of the Christian Church. This consideration receives weight from the fact that the authority of Paul at Ephesus had been supplanted by that of John, who, according to Irenæus, lived and worked at Ephesus, and who is said by Polycrates to have been buried there.¹ To this may be added the charge brought against the Church at Ephesus that she had “left her first love,” implying that she had forsaken Judaic Christianity for Pauline teaching. That the Jewish party was

¹ Eus. *H.E.* iii. 31, v. 24.

strong at Ephesus may be inferred from the fact that Paul was compelled to withdraw his converts from the synagogue to the "school of one Tyrannus," and it would appear that his labours for three years in that city had not been attended with favourable results.¹ It is therefore by no means improbable that "after his departure" a reaction should have taken place similar to that which occurred in the Churches of Galatia, a circumstance alluded to with much feeling by the Apostle himself.² This is confirmed by the fact that St. Paul in his last journey to Jerusalem "went by Ephesus," without assigning an adequate reason for doing so, and summoned the elders of the Church to Miletus, thereby leaving little doubt that an ascendancy had been gained by John and the anti-Pauline party. This Church is also commended for its hatred of the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, "which (says Christ) I also hate." It is conceived that the Nicolaitanes were adherents of Pauline doctrine, and that this epithet, derived from a proselyte of the city where Paul achieved his first successes (Acts vi. 5), was applied to them in contempt, as the term "Christian" was applied derisively to the disciples at Antioch. And here we would remark, in passing, that the unity of the Church, a dream fondly indulged in by enthusiasts of the present day, was but of short duration. Divisions soon began to declare themselves, and men who had listened to the Apostles themselves speedily asserted their choice of teachers. By far the most serious difference was that which separated the Johannean and Pauline schools, and it seems probable that the acrimony between them may have led the seer of Patmos to inveigh against the Apostle of the Gentiles as a teacher not included within the sacred college.

A hollow truce, if indeed we may give credit to the statements of the Acts (a book clearly written with the object of reconciling the differences between the Petrine and Pauline parties), was concluded between them when the leaders of the church at Jerusalem gave to Paul and Barnabas the right

¹ Acts xx. 29-31.

² 2 Tim. i. 15. ♣

hand of fellowship, that the latter should go to the heathen as the former to the Jews; but this agreement was neither real nor lasting. No long time elapsed before certain came from James to Antioch to spy out privily the Christian liberty of the Gentile converts, and from that time the breach between them assumed a positive and distinct character. To such a pitch did this rupture proceed, that Paul withstood Peter to the face because he had incurred blame, whilst, on the other hand, Barnabas was carried away with the dissimulation of the Jews who came with Peter. The jarring sentiments of the conflicting schools speedily found vent in their respective writings. This is evident from the fact that the Epistles of James and Jude are directed against heretical teaching which corresponds with that ascribed to St. Paul; whilst sharp invective against James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be "pillars," and "somewhat" (it mattered nothing to Paul, to whom he gave place by subjection no, not for an hour), runs through that splendid burst of indignant rhetoric, the Epistle to the Galatians. It is certain that the apostleship and even the Jewish origin of Paul were seriously called in question, and that marks of sensitiveness under calumnious accusations abound in his epistles. Thus we find him saying, as if in refutation of previous insinuations to the contrary, "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ, our Lord? Are not ye my work in the Lord? If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord. Mine answer to them that do condemn me is this."¹ So again, "I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing."² He is equally explicit in asserting his Jewish origin, which also appears to have been seriously denied. I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin."³ "Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews."⁴

¹ 1 Cor. ix. 1-3.² 2 Cor. xi. 5; xii. 11, 12.³ Rom. xi. 1.⁴ Phil. iii. 5.

With reference perhaps to his own exclusion by the twelve, he says, "Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I;"¹ and in his defence before the Jewish people he not only speaks to them in the Hebrew tongue, but asserts, "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city (Jerusalem) at the feet of Gamaliel."² On the other hand Paul's adversaries are described by himself as "grievous wolves," "deceitful workers," "false teachers," "false brethren," who, armed with letters of recommendation from Jerusalem, controverted his apostleship, impugned his disinterestedness, derided his language and appearance; in short spared neither artifice nor calumny in lowering him in the estimation of the Gentile communities originally founded by him. It is, however, in the Apocalypse that the acrimony between these champions of opposite faiths reaches its greatest height. Whilst the followers of Paul are opprobriously termed Nicolaitanes and Balaamites, he is himself a false Jew, a false apostle; no term of abuse being too violent, and no form of wickedness too revolting, to point out the apostate who is here made to realize to its full extent the *odium theologicum* of the first century. This antagonism between the Johannine and Pauline schools may be traced to the peculiar circumstances of the Churches of Jerusalem and Antioch. The former consisted chiefly of orthodox Jews, blindly zealous of the law of Moses, who had accepted Judaic Christianity. These were under the spiritual guidance of the original apostles who had seen Christ, and who derived their commission direct from Him. The latter was composed chiefly of Gentile proselytes, to whom the ceremonies of the Mosaic law were distasteful, and whose spiritual teachers had no claim to a place among the twelve. Hence when Paul appeared to assert this claim for himself, and declared that "truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among them in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds," it was only natural

¹ 2 Cor. xi. 22.² Acts xxii. 3.

that this assumption of apostolic powers should have called forth the indignation of the partisans of Judaic Christianity. The epistle, therefore, to the Church at Ephesus points to a state of things such as would be likely to exist under the circumstances of the case, when the broader and more catholic ministry of Paul had been followed by the less liberal teaching of one of the leaders of the Jewish party. It also abounds, as we have seen, in invective against Pauline teaching, denounces the great apostle of the Gentiles as an evil person and a liar, calls in question his apostleship, and urges his converts to repent and do the works of the law in lieu of trusting to Paul's talisman of faith. What a picture is here drawn of the want of apostolic unity. How painful a contrast is presented between the Gospel of the Gentile contained in the first four undoubted epistles of St. Paul and the Gospel of the Jew contained in the Apocalypse. Is it a wonder that dissension is still rife among the Churches when the earliest Church presented so contagious an example?

To the victor at Ephesus the reward is promised of partaking of "the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God"—an idea familiar to the ancient Rabbis and to the prophet Ezekiel.¹ Dean Milman cites the Rabbinical belief that in the days of Messiah, Israel shall sit down and eat in the garden of Eden, and satiate themselves all the days of the world.

SMYRNA.

"And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty (but thou art rich), and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."—Rev. ii. 8-11.

There is nothing in the epistle to the Church at Smyrna

¹ Ezek. xlvii. 12.

which demands particular attention. Like the rest, the circumstances in which it is placed are those of tribulation, and particular mention is made of its "poverty," arising probably from the confiscation of the property of excommunicated persons.¹ The exclusive spirit manifested in this epistle betrays itself in the mention of "the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan," a passage contrasting sharply with the more liberal sentiments of Paul, with whom "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye all are one in Christ Jesus."² From the consideration of past and present trials the writer proceeds to anticipate others shortly to come, and the Church of Smyrna is bid not to fear what it is about to suffer in the great Antichristian tribulation then thought to be fast approaching. "The devil (it is said) is about to cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days"—an indefinite period (cf. Dan. i. 14, 20). That this Satanic persecution was to exceed that which had preceded may be inferred from the exhortation to be "faithful unto death, and they should receive the crown of life."³ In addition to this the reward is held out to the victor of immunity from "the second death, which is the lake of fire"—the especial privilege of the martyrs who should have part in the first resurrection.

PERGAMOS.

"And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the

¹ Heb. x. 34.

² Gal. iii. 28; Rom. x. 12; 1 Cor. xii. 13.

³ James i. 12; Ignat. ad Polycarp, epist. i. 12.

doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. Repent ; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches ; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”—Rev. ii. 12–17.

Pergamos is described as the seat (or throne) of Satan, “where Satan dwelleth”—an allusion, it may be, to the worship of Æsculapius, whose symbol of a serpent was peculiarly suggestive of Satan. The merit is ascribed to this Church of not having denied the Christian faith at a season of persecution, “in those days wherein Antipas, my faithful martyr, was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.” Strenuous efforts have been made to acquire some knowledge of this martyrdom, but like many other events alluded to in the Apocalypse which were familiar to the writer, it has hitherto escaped research. Some have thought that St. John here refers to the murder of Stephen, in which Paul took a prominent part, and to which he is made to allude almost in the words of the Apocalypse.¹ The Alexandrine version renders the passage, “And in those days was Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who,” etc. ; the clause “where Satan dwelleth” denoting the wickedness of those “of the synagogue of Satan” (ii. 9 ; iii. 9) who committed the act, and the phrase “those days” pointing to an event which had previously taken place. On the other hand, this Church is blamed for holding the doctrine of Balaam, called by St. Jude “The error of Balaam,” and by the author of the second Petrine Epistle, “The way of Balaam.” There is little doubt that the seer of Patmos had still in view the teaching of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, and that allusion is here made to the permission given by St. Paul to his followers to frequent feasts held in heathen temples, and to eat whatsoever was set before them, asking no question for conscience sake.² Under certain restrictions, the Apostle allowed this practice, which, at a time when it was customary to offer every animal in sacrifice before it was

¹ Acts xxii. 20.

² 1 Cor. x. 27, 28.

eaten, could hardly be avoided, unless, indeed, the Gentile converts were to "go out of the world altogether." It is also probable that by these terms of reproach reference is made to the permission given by St. Paul to his converts to intermarry with Gentiles, an offence which seemed analogous to that of Balaam the heathen seer, who enticed the Israelites to whoredom and idolatry, and who is here selected as a "true type of Paul, the advocate of mixed marriages and feastings in idolatrous temples." This Church, like that of Ephesus, is also accused of holding the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes¹ (whatever that might have been), "which thing," says Jesus, "I hate."

The epistle concludes with a promise to him that overcometh of the "hidden manna," and the "white stone" inscribed with the new name. By the former, the writer may have intended to show that the martyrs should partake in the first resurrection of "angels' food," as the Israelites of old were fed by God Himself in the wilderness; by the latter, he may have wished to denote the privilege of citizenship in the New Jerusalem.

THYATIRA.

"And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. But unto you I say, and unto

¹ It is probable that the sect of the Nicolaitanes owes its origin to Nicolas, "a proselyte of Antioch," a partisan of Paul who founded the Church in that city. The word Nicholas (conqueror of the people) bears a close affinity to Balaam (conqueror of the people), and the doctrines may have been similar.

the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak ; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations ; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron ; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers : even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”—Rev. ii. 18-29.

In common with the preceding epistles, that to Thyatira¹ conveys the impression that the Jewish Christians of that city, having been seduced by a false teacher, had departed from a first faith. As the Church of Ephesus had “tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and had found them liars ;” as that of Smyrna had experienced “the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan ;” as that of Pergamos had those that held “the doctrine of Balaam,” and that of the Nicolaitanes ; so is the accusation brought against the Church of Thyatira, that she suffered that woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess, to seduce (Christ’s) servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.” It is conceived that by the terms, “that woman Jezebel”—(*thy wife Jezebel*, Alex., a name familiar to every Jew, and suggestive of the abominable idolatry of Ahab, whom “Jezebel his wife stirred up”), the writer intended to denounce the pernicious doctrines of a female disciple of Paul, who was to the Church at Thyatira what his Sidonian spouse was to Ahab. The connection of this false teacher with the city of Thyatira naturally points to Lydia, a pious woman of that city, converted to Christianity by Paul, to whose house the disciples were wont to resort,² and who may have accompanied the Apostle in his wanderings. He possibly alludes

¹ Against the genuineness of this epistle, as well as that of the Revelation generally, the objection was raised by the Alogi (or Irrationalists) at the end of the second or the beginning of the third century, that John had said, “Write to the angel of the church which is in Thyatira, whereas there is not now a church of Christians in Thyatira.”

² Acts xvi. 14, 15, 40.

to this when he says, "Have we not power to eat and drink? have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife (*i.e.*, a Christian wife), as the brethren of the Lord and Cephas?"¹ And in his exhortation to the Christian women at Philippi,² in which city the house of Lydia was situated, he probably addresses her by the conjugal title of "true yokefellow," or *own wife* (in the sense in which Timothy is his "own son")³—an interpretation adopted by Clement of Alexandria and by Eusebius. In language conceived in a spirit of deep irony it is asserted of this new Jezebel that she "calletlh herself a prophetess"—an office not unfrequently exercised by Christian women (Acts ii. 17; xxi. 9); and the charge preferred against her of seducing Christ's servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols, is the same as that made against the Balaamites of the Church of Pergamos. A reference to Pauline doctrine may also be seen in an allusion to an expression familiarly employed by the Apostle. He had been wont to call his revelations "The deep things of God":⁴ in a spirit of sarcastic irony, they are here called "The depths of Satan, as they (the false teachers) say." The bed of affliction in which she is to be cast, as well as the death with which her proselytes are to be killed (an evident allusion to the miserable end of the sorceress "whose whoredoms and whose witchcrafts were so many"),⁵ may refer to the punishment to be inflicted upon herself, and upon those who had been seduced by her idolatrous practices, at the Advent of Messiah, when, like another Jehu, he should "give to every one according to his works." It is promised to those which have not this doctrine, that no other burden should be put upon them but that which they have already; a passage elsewhere closely imitated,⁶ in which not only the charge to the Gentile converts to abstain from meats offered in sacrifice to idols and from fornication, but the command of the Spirit to the Churches is reproduced in that of the Holy Ghost to the

¹ 1 Cor. ix. 4, 5.² Phil. iv. 1-3.³ 1 Tim. i. 2.⁴ 1 Cor. ii. 10.⁵ 2 Kings ix. 22.⁶ Acts xv. 28, 29.

Council. The concluding injunction, "Hold fast till I come," or, as the same idea of proximity is intimated by the words "Unto the end," denotes an interval of the briefest kind between the promise of the Advent and its fulfilment, and, as in other portions of the New Testament, makes that event synchronical with the final consummation of all things.

To the victor at Thyatira the promise is made of "power over the nations," and of ability to "rule them with a rod of iron." These gross and literal conceptions of a stern and wide-spread dominion to be exercised by Messiah and his saints over the heathen world are to be traced to similar views enunciated in the Books of Enoch and Daniel, and present features at variance with "transcendental philosophies and imaginative theories" respecting the spiritual nature of the kingdom whose advent was proclaimed by Jesus.

Besides the privilege of supremacy over the less favoured Gentiles, the promise is made to "him that overcometh" of the gift of "the morning star," a gift significant of the splendour of those who should attain unto the first resurrection, and conveying the idea of a sameness of reward with Messiah himself.¹

SARDIS.

"And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."—Rev. iii. 1-6.

Jesus is represented as addressing the Sardian Church

¹ Rev. xxii. 16.

under the title of him that hath "the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars."¹ The latter of these symbols is explained in the book itself so that nothing more need be said. "The seven Spirits of God" associated in the salutation with the Almighty Father and with Jesus Christ, and described as standing before the throne in the attitude of ministering spirits,² may be interpreted of "the seven holy angels which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One,"³ called by St. Paul "The elect angels," and by St. Luke, "The angels of God."

The charge preferred against the Church of Sardis is of a graver kind than those laid against previously mentioned Churches, and with partial exceptions it is condemned as having a name to live, but, in reality, dead, or about to die. The caution solemnly impressed upon this lifeless Church, is, watchfulness. "In an hour, such as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." In terms conceived, not only in the spirit but in the very letter of the Gospels, the Apocalypse rings out the *Maran Atha* of the latter days. "If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief,⁴ and thou shalt not

¹ The symbols of the Apocalypse appear not only to have been comparatively easy of interpretation to a contemporaneous age, but are not unfrequently explained in the book itself. Thus "the seven stars—are the angels of the seven churches." "The seven candlesticks—are the seven churches." "The great dragon—(is) that old serpent called the Devil and Satan." "The waters where the whore sitteth—are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." The Woman—is "that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." "The seven heads—are seven mountains and seven kings." "The ten horns—are ten kings." "The fine linen—is the righteousness of saints." The Millennial reign—"is the first resurrection." "The lake which burneth with fire and brimstone—is the second death."—"Where an interpretation (says Dean Woodhouse) is expressly given in the vision, that interpretation must be used as the key to the mystery in preference to all interpretations suggested by the imagination of man."

² Rev. i. 4 ; iv. 5.

³ Tobit xii. 15.

⁴ Matt. xxiv. 42-44 ; Luke xii. 39 ; 1 Thess. v. 2 ; 2 Pet. iii. 10 ; Rev. xvi. 15.

know what hour I will come upon thee"—at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning.

To the few who had not sullied their robes by impurity or by the defilements of false teaching, it is promised that they should be clothed in white raiment, and should walk with Christ in white, for they are worthy;¹ the colour, the hue of victory as well as of spotlessness, and indicative of the glories of the first resurrection. And if to this the writer adds the assurance that their names should not be wiped out of the Book of Life, and that Messiah would confess their names before his Father, and before his angels, it is because he conceived of the reward of the saints as of a great city coming down from God out of heaven, and of its blessed inhabitants as citizens whose names were inscribed on the public registers, from which they could not be removed except by death or crime.

PHILADELPHIA.

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."—Rev. iii. 7-13.

The epistle to the Church of Philadelphia is remarkable for its immunity from the grave rebuke which marks those addressed to Sardis and Laodicea. In the letter to this

¹ Rev. vi. 11; vii. 9; xix. 14.

Church, Jesus describes himself as "He that is holy, he that is true," *i.e.*, the real Messiah, and as "He that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth;" words used primarily of Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, the treasurer in the room of Shebna,¹ and significant of authority over the house of David, and of power to admit into, or to exclude from the kingdom of Messiah. To the members of the Jewish portion of this favoured Church, who are distinguished from Pauline heretics "of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie," it is promised that "because they had kept the word of his patience, they too should be kept from the hour of temptation which was soon about to come upon the whole habitable world to try them that dwell on the earth"—*i.e.*, from the great Antichristian tribulation then supposed to be fast approaching. That these perils were thought to be of an immediate accomplishment, may be inferred from the introduction of the rallying cry of the Apocalypse, "Behold, I come quickly," which, like the *Maran Atha* of St. Paul, may have been interchanged by the primitive Christians with a view of encouraging each other in the expectation of the promised Advent; whilst as a further indication of their imminent character, the injunction is given, "Hold fast that thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

The reward of perpetual citizenship in the New and heavenly Jerusalem held out to him that should overcome, has so plain a reference to the city whose glories are delineated in the latter chapters of the book, as not only to bind the Apocalypse in one grand dramatic whole, but to make it difficult to believe that its visions could ever be seriously applied to consecutive events in the history of the world and the Church. It is to the martyrs of the Church of Philadelphia, and not to martyrs of future ages, that the promise is made, "I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon

¹ Isa. xxii. 22.

him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and I will write upon him my new name ;”¹ the clause, “I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God,” receiving additional significance from the circumstance that Philadelphia was subject to frequent earthquakes, being among the twelve cities of proconsular Asia overthrown by these calamities.²

LAODICEA.

“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write ; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God ; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot : I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing ; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked : I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear ; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten : be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock : if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”—Rev. iii. 14-22.

The accusation brought against this Church is that it was “neither cold nor hot,” *i.e.*, that it was indifferent to the superior claims of Judaic Christianity over Pauline teaching. Laodicea is mentioned by St. Paul as a city for which he had a supreme regard, and to which, although he had not visited it personally, he had addressed an epistle, generally supposed to be lost.³ For this reason it may have fallen under the

¹ “R. Samuel filius Nachmanni ait R. Jochananem dixisse, tres appellari nomine Dei S. B., justos (Isa. xliii. 7), Messiam (Jer. xxiii. 6), Hierosolyma (Ezek. xlviii. 35).”—*Bava Bathra*, 75, 2.

Tac. *Ann.* ii. 47.

³ Col. ii. 1 ; iv. 15, 16.

censure of St. John, and the threat is uttered, "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will (soon) spue thee out of my mouth." The rebuke of the Laodicean Church is conceived in a spirit of deep irony. "Because thou sayest I am rich, and am become wealthy, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art the wretched, and the pitiable one, and poor, and blind, and naked. I advise thee to buy from me gold burnt from the fire that thou mayest be rich, and white garments that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness be not made manifest, and eyesalve to anoint thine eyes that thou mayest see;" a rebuke most probably directed against the wealth of the city, on which the inhabitants prided themselves. Like the rest of these epistles it closes with the announcement of the speedy Advent of Messiah under the figure, common to the Gospels, of a supper, or marriage feast, to which the elect are invited at the coming of the bridegroom. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." The promise made to the conqueror at Laodicea to "sit with Messiah upon his throne, even as he overcame and is set down with his Father in his throne," (hence called "the throne of God and the Lamb,"¹) is significant of the dominion to be exercised by Jesus and his saints over the nations of the heathen world, when, to use the words of the Book of Enoch, "The Son of Man will share the throne of God's majesty, and kings, and princes will worship him and invoke his mercy."

The general purport of these epistles, besides their grave rebuke of heretical doctrine, appears to be to invite the attention of the Church of that period to the momentous events which were shortly about to happen at the Advent of Messiah. This is the leading thought which runs like a thread through these encyclical letters, and which also underlies every Seal, Trumpet, and Vial throughout the book. It is the call to

¹ Rev. xxii. 3.

sleepless vigilance so common to the rest of the New Testament. The solemn and unceasing warning to the Church to be "ready" for the coming of her Lord, that he might "present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."¹ "The Spirit and the Bride say COME." "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."

¹ Ephes. v. 27.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FIRST SIX SEALS.

“After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven : and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me ; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit : and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone : and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats : and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment ; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices : and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal : and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him ; and they were full of eyes within : and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power : for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not : behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof : for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests : and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders : and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever."—Rev. iv. v.

THE manifestation of the risen and glorified Jesus to the seer of Patmos resulting in the command to write the Epistles to the Seven Asiatic Churches, may be considered the prelude to the Apocalyptic drama. With the commencement of the fourth chapter the scene is changed. "A door is opened in heaven," and St. John, "*in the spirit*," beholds things which must be hereafter ; *i.e.*, things immediately consequent upon the preceding. Rapt in prophetic vision, he sees the events of the last times pass before him in a series of dissolving views, in which Seals are replaced by Trumpets, and these again by Vials, or bowls, descriptive of the woes upon animate and inanimate nature, the calamities upon Judæa and Jerusalem, the wrath upon Babylon, the defeat of Antichrist, the Advent of Messiah, followed in turn by the Millennial reign, the descent of the New Jerusalem, and the final establishment of the kingdom of Christ and of God. Previously, however, to the gradual unfolding of the mystical drama, St. John is caught up into heaven, and admitted into the *penetralia* of the celestial temple. In imagination coloured

by figures borrowed from Ezekiel and Daniel, he beholds the throne of God encircled by its emerald rainbow,¹ and the Unnamed One² sitting upon it, to look upon as a jasper and as a sardine stone. Around the throne were four-and-twenty seats, and upon them four-and-twenty elders sitting, significant of the order of the ministering priests,³ engaged in the temple worship; and seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God. Before the throne was a sea of glass like unto crystal,⁴ and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne were four living creatures,⁵ ζῶα, full of eyes before and behind,⁶ and they rest not⁷ day or night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. In the right hand of Him which sat on the throne was a book "written within and without," and sealed with seven Seals. The seer weeps much because no man is found worthy to open the book, when, lo, the Lion of the tribe of Judah takes the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, and

¹ Ezek. i. 28.

² "Et collaudavi eum qui non nominatur, et præpotentem qui in cœlis habitat, cujus nomen non patefactum est cuiquam mortali."—(Ascen. Isai. Vatis, vii. 37).

³ 1 Chron. xxiv.

⁴ Ex. xxiv. 10; Zech. iv. 10.

⁵ "After this, I beheld thousands of thousands, and myriads of myriads, and an infinite number of people standing before the Lord of spirits. On the four wings likewise of the Lord of spirits, on the four sides, I perceived others besides those who were standing before him. Their names too I know, because the angel who proceeded with me declared them to me, discovering to me every secret thing. Then I heard the voices of those upon the four sides magnifying the Lord of glory. The first is the merciful, the patient, the holy Michael. The second is he who presides over every suffering and every affliction of the sons of men, the holy Raphael. The third who presides over all that is powerful, is Gabriel. And the fourth who presides over repentance and the hope of those who shall inherit eternal life, is Phanuel. These are the four angels of the Most High God, and their four voices which at that time I heard."—(Book of Enoch, xl.)

⁶ Ezek. i. 4; x. 12.

⁷ "Without sleeping," Book of Enoch, xxxix.

amidst the triumphant acclamations of earth and heaven prepares to break the seals.¹

It is characteristic of the first four Seals that they are introduced respectively by one of the four living creatures which stand in the presence of God, that they each have the common emblem of a horse and horseman, that they refer to a common subject, as is usual in this book whenever the mysterious number "seven" is divided into "four" and "three," and that they are prefaced (with, perhaps, the exception of the first) not as in our English version, by the words "Come and see;" but by the significant word, COME, denoting at once the impatience of the writer, and the nearness of the event. Without dwelling too much upon particulars, or straining the symbols of a figurative book like the Apocalypse beyond their legitimate meaning, we shall expect to find under each Seal a basis of real or supposed fact, the remaining parts being subsidiary, and, as it were, helps to finish out the picture.

THE FIRST SEAL.

"And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer."—Rev. vi. 1, 2.

¹ "And again I heard a voice saying unto me, I will command the Lamb to come before me, and I will say, Who shall open this book? And all the multitude of angels shall answer, Let this book be given to the Lamb to open it. And then I will command the book to be opened. And when he shall open the first Seal, the stars of heaven shall fall from the top to the bottom. And when he shall open the second Seal, the moon shall be darkened and there shall be no light in her. And when he shall open the third Seal, the light of the sun shall be restrained, and there shall not be light upon the earth. And when he shall open the fourth Seal, the heavens shall be dissolved, and the air shall be unfurnished (with stars). And when he shall open the fifth Seal, the earth shall be rent asunder, and all the judgment places upon the face of all the earth shall be revealed. And when he shall open the sixth Seal, Hades shall be uncovered."—*Apocryphal Apocalypse of John*, 19.

The first four Seals having each the emblem of a horse and horseman, and being introduced by one of the four living creatures with the emphatic words "Come and see," demand similar interpretation, and require to be applied to the same individuals or powers. They refer to a period connected with conquest, war, famine, and pestilence, such as marked the time when the Roman power began to make itself felt over Judea. The emblem of a *horse*, by which the first as well as the others is distinguished, is significant of the Roman nation. The colour *white*, denotes victory and triumph. The *bow* in the hand of the rider is emblematical of success. The *crown* suggests the idea that his efforts would be rewarded with imperial dignity; and his going forth "*conquering and to conquer*," that he would persevere in his glorious career till he had overcome all opposition.

If an historical interpretation of this symbol be admissible, it would seem to point to Vespasian as the champion who at that time went forth to victory, and who, at Nero's death, was saluted Emperor by the legions. Josephus abundantly testifies that success everywhere followed the irresistible armies of Rome. This is commemorated to this day by the triumphal arch of Titus, and by a medal representing a female figure weeping under a palm tree, with the motto, *Judæa devicta*.—Judea conquered.

THE SECOND SEAL.

"And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword."—Rev. vi. 3, 4.

"The red horse and his sword-bearing rider (says Victorinus) represent those woes which are predicted, and of which we read in the Gospel, 'Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be great earthquakes.' This is the red horse." It would, perhaps, be

difficult to come nearer to the meaning of the symbol than this earliest commentator on the Apocalypse has already done. It is well known that the period we have assigned for the composition of the book was marked by sanguinary and almost universal wars. The Roman empire from Gaul to the Euphrates was convulsed by struggles for the imperial crown. Judea lay prostrate at the feet of Vespasian and Titus, and the words of Jesus seemed to receive a literal fulfilment, "I came not to send peace on earth but a sword." It is probable that the political distractions at that time convulsing the earth may have been regarded as indications of the approaching Advent, and may have given shape to the still more terrible calamities which were expected to follow.

THE THIRD SEAL.

"And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine."—Rev. vi. 5, 6.

The third Seal is, beyond doubt, indicative of famine, one of the terrible precursors of Messiah's Advent. The colour of the horse, black, is significant of mourning and distress: the rider holding in his hands a pair of balances for the purpose of measuring and weighing food, and the voice saying, "A chœnix of wheat for a denarius, and three chœnixes of barley for a denarius, and the oil and wine do not thou injure," may signify that the prices of food would be raised to famine prices, and that a difficulty would be felt in obtaining the necessaries of life. "The black horse (says Victorinus) means famine, for the Lord says 'There shall be famines in divers places.' Now the saying properly extends to the time of Antichrist, when there will be a great famine by which all men shall suffer." This scarcity is said by the same commentator to be caused by the Two Witnesses who withhold

rain during the time of their prophecy, thereby creating great famine throughout the world, an idea also repeated by the Sibyl. Independently of this view, the notion of famine as one of the accompanying signs of the approaching Advent may have been suggested by "the great dearth throughout all the world which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar,"¹ and possibly by the scarcity more recently experienced at Rome at the close of Nero's reign.

THE FOURTH SEAL.

"And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth."
—Rev. vi. 7, 8.

The colour of the fourth horse is livid—a colour suiting the rider, for his name is Death, and Hades (the abode of the dead personified) accompanies him. Power is given to this cadaverous horseman "over the fourth part of the earth to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth," an idea common to the ancient prophets who represent the judgments of God under a similar form.

Such are the woes which introduce the catastrophe for which the world was waiting. First comes the Roman champion on the white horse, denoting the beginning of the end, and going forth conquering and to conquer. Then the red horse, significant of internecine war among the nations of the earth. Then the black courser, emblematical of unequal balances and scant measures; and, last of all, the pale horse "bestrode by death," bringing up the rear of this gaunt and terrible array. Divested of the subsidiary accompaniments, the general idea conveyed by the first four Seals seems to be that the Advent of Messiah would be the signal for the introduction of unparalleled calamities, and that his coming with

¹ Acts xi. 28.

clouds would cause a note of woe to be struck which would be echoed by all the tribes of the earth. These, however, are but "the beginning of sorrows." Greater and more appalling tribulations have yet to be developed; the Apocalypse, from its very nature, always culminating in a seventh, and unfolding with gradually increasing clearness and intensity the terrors of the last times.

THE FIFTH SEAL.

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."—Rev. vi. 9-11.

A new picture is unfolded under the fifth Seal. The four living creatures who appear to have fulfilled their mission in announcing the Advent of Messiah, disappear. The horses and their riders fade from our view. Conquest, war, famine, and death, recede. The actors are no longer ministers of vengeance but victims of persecution, and the vision opens upon us of plaintive martyrs and suffering saints. In accordance with Jewish notions respecting the souls of the faithful departed, the spirits of these martyrs are seen beneath the altar¹ of the heavenly temple, invoking vengeance upon their murderers, and saying "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"—a prayer which finds a response in the judgments shadowed forth by the succeeding Vials. In answer to this impatient cry, a white robe² is given to each of them,

¹ "Nihil morare, ait Dominus (ad Mosen), venit tibi summa dies; ego te in superiori cælo sub throno gloriæ collocabo."—(*De Morte Moſis*. Gfræter, p. 361).

² "Et vidi illic vestes multas repositas, multosque thronos, multasque coronas. Et inquam angelo qui me ducebat, Quorum sunt hæ vestes,

a pledge, as it were, of salvation and of future victory, and they are bid to rest for a while until their fellow-servants also and their brethren that should (shortly) be killed, as they were, should be fulfilled—a season of patient waiting, not extended over a long period, but comprising the interval between the persecutions of Nero and his expected return as Antichrist. This passage supplies one out of many arguments in favour of a speedy accomplishment for the Apocalyptic visions, for the writer connects the persecution which had recently taken place (A.D. 64) with that which was shortly about to succeed it, and not only declares that the space between them is of brief duration, but represents the victims of the latter as the brethren of the martyrs of the former tyranny.

THE SIXTH SEAL.

“And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”—Rev. vi. 12–17.

It will readily be admitted that the correspondence between the sixth Seal and the predictions recorded in the Synoptic Gospels is of such a perfect kind as to make it impossible to interpret the respective vaticinations of other than the same events. It is a consolation to find that this view is entertained by orthodox commentators. “The interpretation of

thronique, coronæque? Et mihi inquit, Hæ sunt vestes multorum ex mundo qui accipient fidem suam a verbis illius qui, ut tibi dixi, sic appellabitur, et qui servabunt ea verba, et fidem habebunt in iis, et in illius cruce: his sunt repositæ.”—(*Ascen. Isai. Vatis*, ix. 24–26).

this sixth Seal (says Dean Alford) is a crucial point in Apocalyptic exegesis. We may unhesitatingly set down all interpretations as wrong which view as the fulfilment of this passage any period except that of the Coming of the Lord." To this statement we give our unqualified assent, although we are unable to regard that event from the same point of view as the writer, or to add our "Amen" to his "Come, Lord Jesus." In our opinion the sixth Seal can only be interpreted with fairness of the convulsions¹ of animate and inanimate nature at the Coming of Messiah to judgment; no adequate solution for its sublime imagery is to be found in the political crisis of that, or of any other age, and it is a problem which we leave to the advocates of historical interpretation, to explain it of events which have already occurred in the fortunes of the world and of the Church. But when it is inferred from the impossibility of finding a solution in the past that it relates to a Coming *yet future*, truth compels us to reply that this is contradicted by the declarations of immediate accomplishment found in the book itself. So long as the generation which had heard the words of Christ had

¹ That the Advent of Messiah was to be attended by a convulsion of the material universe may be inferred from 2 Pet. iii. 10, where the heavens are said to "pass away with a great noise, the elements to melt with fervent heat, and the earth and the works therein to be burnt up;" the effect of this calamity not being the entire dissolution of material things, but, as in the case of the Deluge and of the destruction of Sodom, the perdition of ungodly men. This sympathy of nature with the expected catastrophe is indicated in the Synoptic Gospels and the Acts by the darkening of the sun and moon, the falling of stars to the earth, as in the Apocalypse; phenomena which are employed by the prophets to describe previous executions of Divine vengeance upon particular cities and nations, and which were thought to be literally fulfilled. The belief that great events were attended by supernatural signs was deeply implanted in the Jewish and heathen mind (2 Macc. v. 1-4; Jos. *Bell. Jud.* vi. 5; Tac. v. 13); it was therefore natural that the catastrophe of the Advent should be accompanied by alarming portents. Apocryphal imitators of the Apocalypse not only describe the desolations about to fall on material objects, but determine the depth to which the purifying fire should penetrate the surface of the earth.

not passed away, there was room for the exercise of faith and patient waiting, but with the expiration of that term all reasonable hope must have fled for ever. Indeed, the faith of the second generation of Christians is a mystery which refuses to be explained. Be that as it may, the great day came not, but was continually put further and further into the uncertain future.

THE SIXTH SEAL—(*continued*).

“And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephtalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand. After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and power, and might, be unto God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of the tribulation, (the great one), and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither

thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."—Rev. vii.

The sixth Seal brings us to the very threshold of the day of God. It has not yet arrived, for no consummation can take place before the seventh, but it is imminent. The four destroying angels have their commission, and stand on the four corners of the earth ready to execute it, but are forbidden to commence their work of destruction till the elect are safe, and the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. As in the Gospels, so in the Apocalypse, the continuous burden is the gathering of the elect from the four winds at Christ's "appearing and his kingdom"; the evangelists equally with the seer of Patmos proclaiming the salvation of a chosen few out of an evil world, who confessed Jesus as the Messiah. These favoured ones, twelve thousand from each tribe, form an aristocracy of Christian saints, and constitute a spiritual Israel. It is remarkable that in enumerating the sealed from each tribe, the writer, who evidently follows the order in Ezekiel xlviii., omits the tribe of Dan. A reason for this omission may be found in the preceding chapter, ver. 14, where Joseph is said to have "*two portions.*" As this could not be done, without leaving out one of the twelve sons of Jacob, for the structure of the Apocalypse demands the use of the complete number "twelve" to correspond with the requirements of the New Jerusalem, the name of Manasseh is substituted for that of Dan. To this it may be added that the tribe of Dan was notorious for idolatry, and but slightly noticed in the blessing of Jacob (Gen xlix. 16, 17).

"After this" (the words in the original being the same as those rendered "hereafter"¹) the seer beholds "a great multitude which no man can number out of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, standing before the throne

¹ Rev. i. 19; iv. 1.

and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands." This innumerable multitude, selected from "all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," is evidently contrasted with a specific number from the twelve tribes, and having suffered martyrdom, are before the throne of God. The white robes in which they are invested attract the attention of the seer, and the interlocutory explanation, as in Dan. viii. 13, is given by one of the twenty-four elders: "These are they which came out of the tribulation, the great one, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," or, as the same idea is set forth by Pseudo-Esdras, "These be they that have put off the mortal clothing, and put on the immortal, and have confessed the name of God: now they are crowned and receive palms."¹ Among other passages to the same effect this may be adduced as an instance of the priority ever given in this book to the chosen people over the less favoured Gentiles. The elect of all the tribes of the children of Israel, distinguished by the obsignatory mark upon their foreheads, are alone privileged to stand upon Mount Sion, to sing the new song which no man could learn but the 144,000 which were redeemed from the earth, and to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth: on the other hand, the proselytes from the Gentile world receive no seal of electing favour, walk by the "pale reflex" of the light of the heavenly city, partake of the leaves instead of the fruit of the tree of life, and are ranked below these "firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb."

In recapitulating the opening of the first six Seals, we may observe that they correspond in a marked manner with the predictions uttered by, or attributed to Jesus in the Gospels. Conquest, war, famine, death—that eschatological "beginning of sorrows;" the impatient cry of the martyrs for vengeance upon their persecutors, the great tribulation, the sympathetic throes of material nature, convulsed, as it were, at the terrors of Messiah's Advent, the great day of the

¹ 2 Esdras ii. 45.

wrath of the Lamb, and the gathering of the elect from the four winds and the four corners of the earth, are traced with as firm a hand in the former as in the latter, and that interpretation would alone seem to be admissible which shall explain the respective anticipations of the same events. The identity perceptible between the imagery of the sixth Seal in particular, and that employed in the Gospels, added to the reiteration of the pathetic words addressed by our Lord to the daughters of Jerusalem,¹ would, in our opinion, so restrict the subject to the Coming of the Son of Man to judgment, as to set the question of interpretation at rest for ever.²

¹ Luke xxiii. 28-31.

² From the fact that the Gospel of Luke had been preceded by other Christian records, as the author himself admits (Luke i. 1); that the eschatology of chapter xxi. presents important variations, significant of a later period of composition, from that of Matthew and Mark; and from the appropriation of numerous ideas and phrases from the Apocalypse, it may be inferred that the writer was not only acquainted with the Johanneic Revelation, but that the date of his Gospel is posterior to the destruction of Jerusalem.

CHAPTER V.

THE SEVENTH SEAL.

SIX of the seven Seals have been already opened. The seventh and last, which introduces the consummation, is not broken at once, but is drawn out over a period during which seven Trumpets are sounded, as at a subsequent stage of the prophetic vision, the seventh Trumpet itself is followed by the pouring out of seven Vials. It is a characteristic feature of the Apocalypse that the grand catastrophe, which it is the principal object of the book to announce, is continually postponed. With the opening of the seventh Seal and the sounding of the seventh Trumpet the consummation seemed imminent, and the Advent near at hand ; but although at the sounding of the latter it was declared that "there should be no more delay," the prophecy again resolved itself into new visions which must have their accomplishment before the end can come. This "hope deferred" of the Apocalypse has its counterpart in the disappointment which for eighteen centuries has attended the expectation of the Christian Church : the end appearing ever near, and at certain crises in this world's history so near as to be capable of being definitely fixed, yet ever receding and eluding the grasp of reality. We shall explain these Trumpets¹ (a mode of announcing impending judgments common to the ancient

¹ "In the Trumpets and Vials (says Victorinus, the earliest commentator on the Apocalypse whose work has come down to us, and of whom Jerome says, that he was 'great in thoughts, but unable to express himself in words') there are described the execution wrought by the plagues sent upon the world, the madness of Antichrist himself, the blasphemy of the people, the variety of their plagues, the hope in the kingdom of the saints, the fall of cities, and the fall of that great city Babylon, that is Rome."

prophets) of the woes which befel the Jewish people and city. But before we enter upon their examination we shall call attention to the highly dramatic scene by which they are introduced.

"And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God ; and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer ; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth : and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound." —Rev. viii. 1-6.

The seven angels who stand before God may be interpreted of the seven presence angels, or archangels, but before they sound their trumpet-notes of woe, a pause occurs in the Divine judgments. There is "silence in heaven about the space of half an hour," denoting possibly the completion of one act of judgment and the commencement of another. Then follows a scene of deep significance. An angel having a golden censer filled with incense, which is the prayers of the saints, offers it upon the golden altar which was before the throne. The censer is then filled with burning coals from the altar and cast into the earth, producing voices, lightnings, thunderings, and an earthquake : an adaptation of Ezekiel x., where coals of fire from the heavenly altar are scattered over Jerusalem with a view of punishing the rebellious Jews and of exciting a remnant to repentance. This gives the clue to what follows, and makes it probable that the woes of the Trumpets fall upon the Jewish people and city. This may also be inferred from the nature of the objects ¹ against which

¹ The earlier part of the Apocalypse, which includes the woes of the Trumpets, is chiefly occupied with subjects of especial interest to the Jewish people, such as the prayers of the Jewish martyrs beneath the altar, the sealing of the elect out of the twelve tribes, the partial calamity upon

they are directed as well as from their subdued and mitigated character.

FIRST TRUMPET.

“The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth : and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.”—Rev. viii. 7.

Under the first Trumpet, there is an evident allusion to one of the sore plagues of Egypt, when there was “hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous ; and the hail smote all that was in the field, both man and beast, and smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field” (Ex. ix. 24, 25). It will be noticed that in this woe mercy is mixed with judgment, for only a third part of the trees and of the grass is smitten, leaving two-thirds uninjured.¹ The same partial desolation is recorded in five out of the seven Trumpet woes, and this is still further reduced in the seventh Trumpet, in which only a tenth part of the holy city, Jerusalem, falls. It might be safe to conclude from this circumstance that the calamities announced by the Trumpets overtake the same land and people, and that the author with a pardonable leniency exempted the favoured nation from extreme malediction.

SECOND TRUMPET.

“And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea : and the third part of the sea became blood ; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died ; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.”—Rev. viii. 8, 9.

In the Trumpet there is a plain allusion to another Egyptian plague—the waters of the Nile turned into blood. The same idea is preserved in the corresponding Vial, in

the temple and the holy city, the prophetic mission of the Two Witnesses, and the flight of the Church into the wilderness. The latter portion of the book deals with topics of Gentile interest, such as the Roman kingdom and its seven kings, the rise of Antichrist, the ruin of Babylon, the coming of Messiah, and the millennial reign.

¹ Ezek. v. 2, 12 ; Zech. xiii. 8, 9.

which the sea is also turned into blood. In spite, however, of the verbal agreement between the Trumpets and Vials, their respective application to distinct and different events is too plain to require comment ; for while under the former, only a third part of the sea becomes blood, a third part of the creatures living in the sea dies, and a third part of the ships is destroyed, under the latter, every living creature in it that has life, dies.

THIRD TRUMPET.

“And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters ; and the name of the star is called Wormwood : and the third part of the waters became wormwood ; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.”—Rev. viii. 10, 11.

Under the Trumpet, a great star burning as a lamp, falls upon the third part of the rivers and fountains of waters. The name of this star is Absinthus, and the effect of its operation upon the waters, is to make them, like those of Marah (Ex. xv. 23), too bitter to drink. The mitigated character of the Trumpet plague may be seen in the circumstance that “many men (and not the whole number) die of the waters because they were made bitter.”

FOURTH TRUMPET.

“And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars ; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.”—Rev. viii. 12.

Under the Trumpet, the judgment upon the sun, moon and stars, induces darkness—an allusion to the Egyptian plague which overspread the land for three days and three nights. The expression “the third part” is here insisted on with remarkable frequency, for not only is a third part of the heavenly bodies darkened, but the day and night are involved in obscurity of a similar duration. This mitigation of the calamity once “felt” in Egypt shows the sympathy of the writer,

and contrasts strikingly with the more severe judgment of the corresponding Vial. And in recapitulating briefly the woes of the first four Trumpets, we may observe that they fall upon similar objects of nature, and correspond with similar phenomena recorded in the Gospels. With a close proximity to the Apocalyptic original, Pseudo-Esdras observes, "The *land* that thou seest now to have root shalt thou see wasted suddenly . . . the *sun* (after the third Trumpet) shall suddenly shine again in the night, and the *moon* thrice in the day . . . and even he shall rule whom they look not for that dwell upon the earth. . . . And the Sodomitish *sea* shall cast out fish . . . and *salt waters shall be found in the sweet.*"¹ These, however, are but the sympathetic moanings of material nature with the approaching catastrophe. Greater and more appalling desolations follow as the prophecy draws to a climax; and an eagle (E.V. angel) flying in mid-heaven is heard to cry with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the Trumpet of the three angels which are about to sound."

FIFTH TRUMPET.

"And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women,

¹ 2 Esdras v. 1-13.

and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon."—Rev. ix. 1-11.

In accordance with the division of the Apocalyptic number "seven" into "four" and "three," a new woe is introduced with the fifth Trumpet, whose effects no longer fall, as in preceding woes, upon objects of nature, but upon "the men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads," *i.e.*, the unbelieving Jews.

With the sounding of the fifth Trumpet, a star or angel, which had fallen from heaven unto the earth,¹ and to whom is given the key of the abyss, opens the bottomless pit, from whence issue clouds of supernatural locusts,² the object of whose mission is not, as in the case of the natural insect, to prey upon the green trees and herbs of the earth, but upon the men who were undistinguished by the obsignatory mark which characterized "the 144,000 sealed from all the tribes of the children of Israel." The prodigious number of these un-earthly adversaries is likened to "the smoke of a great furnace" rising in such clouds out of the pit that the sun and air are darkened; and unlike the natural locusts, which are said to have no king,³ these have over them a king "the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon (*destruction*), but in the Greek tongue Apollyon (*a destroyer*)."

¹ "And there I beheld seven stars, *like great blazing mountains, and like spirits*, entreating me. Then the angel said: This place, until the consummation of heaven and earth, will be the prison of the stars and the host of heaven."—*Book of Enoch*, xviii. Cf. Rev. xii. 9; Luke x. 18.

² "I was walking in the Campanian road . . . and I saw dust rising up to heaven . . . and lo, I saw a great beast, like a whale, and from its mouth proceeded fiery locusts . . . So terribly that beast approached as if it could at a blow destroy *the city*. This beast is the emblem of the tribulation about to come."—Hermas, *Shepherd*, vision iv.

³ Prov. xxx. 27.

The power of these locusts is said to last for "five months," and the anguish they inflict is so severe that "men seek for death and do not find it, and desire to die, and death flees from them."

The uncertainty of interpretation which attaches to the locust vision of the prophet Joel¹ extends to that of the Apocalypse, and makes it doubtful whether it should be explained of the ravages of the natural insect or of the invasion of foreign armies. In favour of the latter view it may be said that Judea at this period was devastated by the armies of imperial Rome, and that the king of the locusts (probably Nero) arises out of the bottomless pit (cf. xi. 7; xvii. 8). The shapes of the locusts like horses prepared unto battle, and the sound of their wings as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle, may symbolize the horsemen of which the Roman army was chiefly composed; the crowns like gold on their head and their iron breastplates may be significant of the gorgeous panoply of their invincible legions; their faces as the faces of men and their hair as the hair of women, may denote simply that human beings, and not locusts, are intended; and their teeth, as the teeth of lions, their formidable and all-devouring character. Like the scorpions of the earth (land scorpions plentiful in Palestine) they have power to inflict terrible pangs, while the five months during which they do not kill but only torment the men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads, agrees with the usual duration of the locust plague. The unnatural

¹ This Satanic irruption which is founded on its Egyptian precedent, tinged by poetical colouring borrowed from the prophet Joel, is described in the Apocryphal Apocalypse of Daniel in terms similar to those employed in the Revelation: "Woe unto thee, O earth, because of the torments which the Lord omnipotent is about to send upon thee: locusts fierce and very bloody, which will neither fasten upon the living creatures, nor the trees, but only upon those who have not repented of their numerous sins, and their lawlessness, and unrighteousness: and they shall torment them eighteen months, until they shall call the dead happy, and shall say, Blessed are ye, because ye have not attained to these days" (*Apocryphal Apocalypse of Daniel*).

imagery by which these locusts are described is no impediment to a *substratum* of real fact, for in the succeeding Trumpet, horsemen from beyond the Euphrates are symbolized by equally unreal emblems.

SIXTH TRUMPET.

“And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand : and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone : and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions ; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails : for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood : which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk : neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”—Rev. ix. 13-21.

Under the Trumpet, with the loosing of the four angels who are bound at the river Euphrates (as in Rev. vii. 1, four angels are seen holding the four winds of the earth), an incredible number of Eastern cavalry are set free from the region of that famous river to slay the third part of men. The peculiar mode of warfare adopted by these warriors is not unnoticed. They are horsemen armed with bows, *ἵπποτοξόται* (Herodotus) who shot their arrows with wonderful strength and precision while their horses were in full career, and who were proverbially¹ remarkable for the injury they

¹ “Nec patitur Scythas
Et versis animosum equis
Parthum dicere.”—Hor. *Od.* i. xix. 10.

“Miles sagittas et celerem fugam
Parthi” (timet).—*Ibid.* ii. xii. 17.

“Fidentemque fugâ Parthum, versisque sagittis.”

Virg. *Georg.* iii. 31.

inflicted with these weapons upon an enemy who should attempt to follow them in their flight ; or to use Apocalyptic language, "For their power is in their mouth and in their tails, and with them they do hurt." The number ¹ of these symbolical horsemen out of whose horses' mouths issue fire, smoke and brimstone—an allusion perhaps to the fire, smoke and brimstone which fell upon Sodom²—is two myriads ; "the hour, the day, the month, and the year, unto which, they are prepared," signifying not so much the duration of their hostilities as the period appointed for their irruption. The sixth Trumpet like the sixth Vial, may simply be interpreted of the dreaded Parthian invasion ; but if an historical interpretation of the former should be deemed admissible, it may be remembered that 3000 troops drawn from the defence of the great river Euphrates took part in the military operations of the Romans against Judea (Bell. Jud. v. 1). These were joined by 60,000 Eastern auxiliaries from the same region, besides the camp followers in vast numbers (Bell. Jud. iii. 4 ; Tac. Hist. v. 1). It is twice mentioned that, as in previous woes which fall upon the Jewish people, a third part only of men is slain, notwithstanding that the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues "repented not of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts"—a description which tallies closely with the condition of the Zealots, or *Sicarii*, at Jerusalem.

SEVENTH TRUMPET.

"And the seventh angel sounded ; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come ; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were

¹ Cf. Εὐφρότην διαβὰς πολλαῖς ἄμα μυριάδεσσιν.—*Orac. Sibyll.* iv. 139 ; xi. 122–124.

² Gen. xix. 24–28.

angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great ; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament : and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail."—Rev. xi. 15–19.

As the true principle of Apocalyptic interpretation is to find a consummation in a seventh, with the sounding of the seventh Trumpet ("the last trump," 1 Cor. xv. 52) a climax¹ should be reached. The Messianic angel lifts up his hand to heaven, and swears by Him that liveth for ever and ever, that there shall be no more delay (E. V. "time no longer"), but that when the seventh angel shall begin to sound, "the mystery of God should be finished." Great voices are heard in heaven announcing the arrival of the long expected Messianic kingdom. The four and twenty elders take up the triumphant strain and give thanks to Almighty God that the season of judgment upon the heathen and of reward to the saints has come at last. The ark of the new covenant is seen in heaven, and phenomena expressive of completion are abundantly manifested. But the end is not yet. The characteristic feature of the Apocalypse is delay, and the event is continually deferred. In the present instance the great day is adjourned to make room for further judgments to be executed upon the heathen before the final consummation can take

¹ The accomplishment of the Divine mystery at the sounding of the seventh Trumpet "*as God had declared by his servants the prophets,*" seems to imply that previous Trumpet woes had fallen upon that people who were especially the subjects of prophecy. (Compare 2 Esdras v. 1–13, where the land of Judea and the Sodomish sea are affected at the *third Trumpet*). On the other hand, the command to "prophesy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings," opens a new commission which includes the Vials, against the heathen world. This application of the Trumpets and Vials to separate objects is confirmed by the fact that Jewish feasts as well as the day of Jehovah are announced by the blowing of Trumpets (Num. x. 2 ; Joel ii. 1–15) while Vials of wrath, or "wine cups of fury," are poured out on the Gentiles (Jer. xxv. 15, 17, 28 ; Ps. lxxv. 8).

place, and a roll of a book containing those judgments must be first read off by the seer. Hitherto, we have supposed that the woes denounced in the Apocalypse symbolised events which had come under the personal observation of the writer, the convulsions taking place in the political and the material world; and the invasion of Judea by the Roman armies, supplying themes for the calamities shadowed forth by the Trumpets; and at the period we have assigned for the composition of the book, it required no great exercise of prophecy to anticipate a time of trouble for Jerusalem itself. This is the point at which the woes of the Trumpets are arrested, and the new prophecy begins. The writer now no longer deals with the past but with the uncertain future. The first book in the hand of Him that sat on the throne occupied chiefly with denunciations against the unbelieving Jewish world, is closed; and the second book in the hand of the strong angel of chapter x., containing still more severe judgments against the heathen world, is about to be opened. These last, however, present a difficulty unknown to the former: for whilst the one have a foundation in events which had already occurred, the other rests solely on the imagination of the writer. Hence the calamities of the second book of Fate are for the most part imaginary reproductions of calamities which had already taken place. Thus the persecution of the Christian Church A.D. 64, suggested the great Antichristian tribulation, and the burning of Rome by Nero, the destruction of Great Babylon by the same Imperial incendiary. The symbol of the "Lamb *as it had been slain*" supplied the figure of the Beast "*as it were wounded to death*," and the resurrection of "the first begotten of the dead," the reappearing of the Neronian Antichrist. Everywhere throughout the latter portion of the Apocalypse, Jesus and Nero, Christ and Antichrist, are set in violent contrast, and "the things which are," repeated in "the things which shall be hereafter,"—*after these*.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TWO WITNESSES.

THE subject before us is, without exception, the most abstruse of all the mysteries of the Apocalypse. Every crisis of the ages that are past has been explored, and every phenomenon of this world's history investigated, with the view of discovering a fulfilment for the recusant symbol. The Witnesses have been explained, with equal positiveness, of Moses and Elias, Elias and Enoch, Joshua and Zerubbabel, Christ and John the Baptist, James and Matthias, Pope Sylvester and Mena, Francis and Dominic, John Huss and Luther, the Waldenses and Albigenses, the Old and New Testaments, the Eastern and Western Witnesses, etc., etc. The solution of the Apocalyptic enigma would nevertheless seem as distant as ever, and it is at length advanced that they are supposititious personages who never did and never will exist. To this last conclusion we feel ourselves constrained to subscribe. Like other fictitious characters introduced into this book, the Witnesses, as it appears to us, exist only in the imagination of the writer, and have no more reality than the angel standing in the sun or the beast ascending out of the bottomless pit. It may then at the commencement be remembered with advantage that we are dealing, not with historical fact, but with events which were supposed to accompany the advent of Messiah, and which the fervid expectation of the writer shaped out under the present form.

The episode of the Two Witnesses is introduced at the close of the sixth and before the sounding of the seventh Trumpet; the sixth Trumpet not being exhausted until xi. 14, when its completion is announced in the words, "The second woe is past; and behold the third woe cometh quickly."¹

¹ The word *ταχύ*, here translated "quickly," is the same as that used Rev. ii. 5; iii. 11; xxii. 7, 12, 20. We leave it to the futurists to explain

Before, however, we enter upon it, it will be necessary to examine the preceding context, which introduces, in highly figurative language, the important office which the Witnesses are about to execute.

“And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud : and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire : and he had in his hand a little book open : and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth : and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write : and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer : but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up ; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel’s hand, and ate it up ; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey : and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.”—Rev. x.

The tenth chapter commences by describing the descent from heaven of a strong angel, “clothed with a cloud, and the rainbow upon his head, his face as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire”—imagery borrowed from the ancient prophets. He holds in his hand a little book which had been opened ¹ (and not sealed, as in Dan. xii. 4). He sets his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the earth (compare “The man clothed in linen which was upon the waters of the river” ²) and cries with a loud voice as when a lion roareth,” ³

why in the former case it should be used to express an event approximately near, and in the latter an event indefinitely future.

¹ ἀνεφωγμένον.

² Dan. xii. 6.

³ Rev. v. 5.

expressive of the momentous and final import of the message he delivers. As his communication refers to the consummation which should take place at the sounding of the seventh angel, as soon as he had cried, "seven thunders" (a number indicative of completion) utter their voices; and, as the seer is about to commit to writing the revelations which they disclose, he is prevented by the command, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not;" the reason for this prohibition being the impending character of the approaching catastrophe. This proximity is still more clearly asserted in the oath which follows: "And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand ('his right hand and his left hand')¹ to heaven, and sware by him who liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven and the things that therein are, and the earth and the things that therein are, and the sea and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer (*no more delay*) but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall (*soon*) begin to sound,² the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets."

After this magnificent and solemn prelude to the sounding of the seventh and last Trumpet, the seer takes the little book, the opened one, in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth, as the Lamb had already taken the book out of the right hand of Him that sat on the throne, and in obedience to his commands proceeds to eat it up.³ In his mouth it is as sweet as honey, but when he had eaten it his belly was made bitter. The correspondence between this imagery and that used by Ezekiel is too patent to need comment. The Prophet of the Captivity is commissioned to "speak unto the house of Israel." A hand is mysteriously sent unto him holding "a roll of a book"—a single parchment, perhaps, out of many—agreeing with the little book in the hand of the angel which is sent to St. John. It is opened or unrolled before him with the command, "Eat

¹ Dan. xii. 7.² ὅταν μέλλῃ σαλπίζειν.³ Jer. xv. 16.

this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel . . . Then did I eat it, and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness. . . . and I went in *bitterness*, in the heat of my spirit, but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me.”¹ It will be seen that, with a few unimportant variations, the descriptions harmonize. To the one it is said, “Eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel ;” to the other it is declared, with a wider significance, “Take it, and eat it up . . . for thou must prophesy again before (*concerning or against*) peoples, and nations, and tongues, and many kings.”

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod : and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not ; for it is given unto the Gentiles : and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies : and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy : and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another ; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet ; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud ; and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand : and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.”—Rev. xi. 1-13.

A reed, or staff, is now given to St. John, and he is bid to

¹ Ezek. iii. 1-14.

"measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein ; but the court which is without the temple (he is told to) cast out, and measure it not, for it *was given* to the Gentiles, and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." Two distinct things are here enjoined to be done. The temple, with its altar and worshippers, is to be measured, with a view to its preservation, but the court without the temple (the court of the Gentiles), is to be cast out, and not measured, with a view to its destruction. Here is the first mention made in the Apocalypse of a calamity upon Jerusalem and the Temple as one of the signs of the last days ; and it is remarkable that, as in the Synoptic Gospels, this calamity immediately precedes the advent of Messiah. The holy city is not, however, to be utterly overthrown like great Babylon, but to be trodden under foot of the Gentiles for the Danielic period of three years and a half, an idea borrowed from corresponding desolations in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes.

During the calamities which come upon the holy city, two individuals are suddenly introduced, who "prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days clothed in sackcloth. They are witnesses, or martyrs for Christ, like John the Baptist, the ideal Elias, unto whom the Jews did "whatsoever they listed," or like "Antipas, my faithful martyr, who was slain where Satan dwelleth."¹ They are two² in number, a marked dualism pervading the whole account, and making it difficult to explain them of Christian witnesses generally, or of any line of witnesses in particular. They are clothed in sackcloth,³ possibly on account of the season of distress during which they exercise the prophetic office,⁴ and their prophesying is commensurate with the treading under foot of

¹ Rev. ii. 13.

² The appointment of more than one witness was required by the Mosaic law. "At the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established."—Deut. xix. 15.

³ 2 Kings i. 8.

⁴ Joel i. 13.

the holy city, and the flight of the woman (the Church) into the wilderness. They occupy an exalted and dignified position, resembling that of Joshua and Zerubbabel, "the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth," inasmuch as they are trees of blessing and peace, and candlesticks of light in the midst of surrounding darkness. They have power to call down fire from heaven, as Moses did at the rebellion of Korah,¹ and at Taberah,² and as Elijah did at Dothan.³ The attribute is further assigned to them of being able to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, thereby creating famine,⁴ and of turning waters into blood;⁵ in a word, of repeating the miracles performed by two of the most celebrated Hebrew prophets, and of smiting the earth with all plagues as often as they will.

When these two prophets have finished their testimony, they are slain by the Neronic Antichrist ascending out of the bottomless pit, and their dead body shall lie upon the broad street of "the great city (Rome),⁶ which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where too their Lord was crucified." These witnesses may be supposed to defend the cause of Christ against the delusions of Antichrist, and to work

¹ Num. xvi. 35.

² Num. xi. 1-3.

³ 2 Kings i. 10.

⁴ Luke iv. 25; James v. 17.

⁵ Exod. vii. 19.

⁶ We incline to the opinion that Rome and not Jerusalem is here designated for the following reasons. 1. It is hard to believe that "the great city spiritually called Sodom and Egypt" can be the beloved Jerusalem. 2. Rome is always described in the Apocalypse as "Great Babylon," or the "Great city." 3. The Two Witnesses are slain by the Neronic Antichrist which supposes a Roman execution. 4. The broad space—*πλατεία*—of the city agrees better with the Forum at Rome, than with the narrow streets of Jerusalem. 5. The corpse *τὸ πρῶμα* lying in the street of the great city may refer to the crucifixion of Peter at Rome. 6. They of the people, and kindred, and tongues, and nations (x. 11), *i.e.* the heathen inhabitants of Rome, "see their dead body three days and a half." 7. The last clause may simply mean that as the dead body of one of them (Peter) lay in the Forum at Rome, so that of the other (James) should lie at Jerusalem, "where also *their* Lord was crucified." The Greek is abominable, as in ii. 13.

miracles,¹ to counteract the great wonders whereby the beast deceiveth them that dwell on the earth. The writer of the Apocalypse seems to put the words into their lips which they may be thought to have used : " Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of his judgment is come ; " " If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured without mixture into the cup of his indignation." Their testimony, however, is overborne. These precursors, not of the suffering, but of the triumphant Messiah, are slain ; and they, *i.e.* some of the Gentile nations, see their dead bodies three days and a half, and with a refinement of barbarity hold festival over their downfall, and do not suffer their corpses to be put into graves.² But their exultation is of short duration. After " the three days and a half," the spirit of life from God enters into them ; they stand upon their feet, and in obedience to the heavenly summons ascend up in the cloud while their enemies behold

¹ The power of working miracles, especially of that kind which interfere with the production of food, is attributed to the Tishbite by the Sibyl, who feelingly describes the miseries about to come on women with child and young babes in consequence of this scarcity (ii. 186-192). Similarly Lactantius says, " When the end of the times draws near, God will send a great prophet, who will convert men to the knowledge of himself, and will receive power to work miracles. Whenever men refuse to listen to him, he will shut heaven and withhold the showers, he will turn water to blood, and will torment men with hunger and thirst ; and whoever attempts to hurt him will be devoured by the fire that proceeds out of his mouth." With manifest allusion to the scarcity produced by these Apocalyptic plagues, the author of 2 Esdras observes : " And suddenly shall the sown places appear unsown ; the full storehouses shall suddenly be found empty . . . the springs of fountains shall stand still, and in three hours they shall not run " (vi. 22-24). Similarly it is said in the Apocryphal Apocalypse ascribed to John, of the times of Antichrist, " Then will I make the heaven brass that it should not give dew upon the earth, and I will hide the clouds in secret places that they may not induce moisture upon the earth, and I will restrain the horns of the winds that the wind should not blow upon the earth " (7).

² Allusion to similar treatment of the high priests Jesus and Ananus (Jos. Bell. Jud. iv. 4, 5).

them. The same hour there is "a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city (Jerusalem) fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand (a small portion only), and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven."

And now comes the *vexata quæstio* which has baffled the penetration of the wisest and defeated the labours of the most pious and painstaking—Who are the Two Witnesses? ¹ Are they to be interpreted only of two individuals or of separate lines of witnesses, or do they represent abstract impersonalities, as the Law and the Prophets, or the Old and the New Testaments?

¹ The voice of antiquity pronounces strongly in favour of Enoch and Elias as the Two Witnesses. Not to mention the predilections of Tertullian and Hippolytus for Enoch as the second witness, in that remarkable production of the so-called Second Book of Esdras, written perhaps within thirty years of the Apocalypse itself, it is said that in the day of the Messiah "they should see those men who have ascended, and who have not tasted death from their birth (words applicable only to Enoch and Elijah): and the heart of the inhabitants of the world shall be changed, and another heart shall be given to them" (2 Esdras vi. 26, 27). In the Gospel of Nicodemus, the Two Witnesses are said to be Enoch and Elljah, who would "return at the coming of Antichrist, and, armed with divine signs and miracles, would engage with him in battle, and be slain by him at Jerusalem, and would be taken up alive again into the clouds after three days and a half." In the Apocryphal Apocalypse of Peter mention is made (cap. lxvii.) of the descent of Enoch and Elijah, who should be slain by Antichrist. In the Apocryphal Apocalypse of Esdras, Enoch, Elias, and Moses are seen together in Paradise, in company with Peter and Paul, and Luke and Matthew: in that ascribed to Paul, Enoch is called "the witness of the last time;" and in that ascribed to John, their office as champions of Messiah against Antichrist is distinctly asserted: "I will send Enoch and Elias to rebuke him (Antichrist), and they shall show him to be a liar and a deceiver—*ψεύστην καὶ πλάνον*—and he shall destroy them at the altar" (8). Maitland observes, "While everything points to Elijah as one of the witnesses, Scripture leaves us in uncertainty respecting the name of the other. Following Ben-Sirach and the Scribes, the Pseudo-Sibyl, Justin, and Origen speak of Elias alone; Tertullian and Hippolytus add Enoch. Lactantius speaks of one only. Victorinus suggests Jeremiah as a second. The Pseudo-Hippolytus is disposed to make *three* tabernacles—one for John, one for Enoch, and one for Elias.

It will be observed at the outset that the subject before us transcends the limits of sober inquiry and passes into the region of wild imagination. We shall not therefore be careful to ask whether a real fulfilment may be found for them, as we can conceive of no historical personages to whom the description could possibly apply. Our task is simply to realize the picture which the author proposed to himself when he depicted these extraordinary precursors of Messiah's advent, and we are not so much concerned to show its agreement or disagreement with historical fact, as to give a faithful exposition of the vision as it presented itself to the mind of the writer.

Among the catalogue of Christian worthies slain by the Roman beast, Peter and James bear the closest resemblance to the features by which the Two Witnesses are described. It is of them, and of them only, who together with John (himself also a witness, *ἐμαρτύρησε*, i. 2) constituted the apostolic triumvirate, that it can be affirmed that they were associated in a mysterious manner with Moses and Elias upon the holy mount. With a familiarity which betrays an intimate knowledge of their person and office, they are called "My Two Witnesses," and Jesus is said to be "*their*—*αὐτῶν*—Lord," implying a close relationship, as of disciples, to their Master. They are further described as "Eye-witnesses of his majesty, whilst making known the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. i. 16). Finally, both are slain by the Neronic Antichrist, corresponding with the crucifixion of Peter at Rome (cf. "The Church at Babylon," 1 Pet. v. 13, and the rejoicing over Babylon, Rev. xviii. 20), and the murder of James "the brother of John," by Herod at Jerusalem—a fate which could hardly be supposed to befall such exalted personages as Moses and Elias of whom the symbol is not unfrequently interpreted. The circumstance, however, which seems more immediately to favour our exposition, is that they come "in the spirit and *power* of Elias," and perform miracles similar to those accomplished by that ancient prophet.

The passage which seems to refer to Moses and Elias with

the greatest clearness is to be found Rev. xi. 6: "These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will." In this verse certain definite qualities are attached to the Two Witnesses which fit in more closely with the circumstances of these two Hebrew prophets than with those of any other historical personages with whom we are acquainted. Of Elijah alone could it be predicated that he had power to shut heaven for three years and a half, that it should not rain in the days of his prophecy;¹ and of Moses alone that he had not only power to turn waters into blood,² but to smite the earth with all plagues³ as often as he would. The Witnesses are further called "*these two prophets*" (possibly in contradistinction to the False Prophet) because they exercise the qualities and repeat the miracles of two ancient prophets, of one of whom it was said that "there arose not a *prophet* since in Israel like unto Moses";⁴ and of the other, "Behold I send you Elijah the *prophet* (Elijah the Tishbite,⁵ LXX), before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord."⁶ To this it may be added, that not only was the coming of Elijah at that period the settled expectation of the Jewish people,⁷ but tradition connected the joint appearance

¹ 1 Kings xvii. 1.² Ex. vii. 19.³ Ex. ix. 14.⁴ Deut. xxxiv. 10.

"Ἡξεῖ καὶ Μωσῆς ὁ μέγας φίλος Ὑψίστοις,
Σάρκας δυσάμενος, Ἀβραὰμ δ' αὐτὸς μέγας ἦξει,
'Ισαὰκ ἡδ' Ἰακώβ, Ἰησοῦς, Δανιὴλ ἡδ' Ἡλίας.

Orac. Sibyll. ii. 246-248

⁵ Καὶ τόθ' ὁ Θεοσβίτης γε ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ἄρμα τιταίνων
Οὐράνιον, γαίῃ δ' ἐπιβάς, τότε σήματα τρισσὰ
Κόσμφ' ὅλφ' δείξει τε ἀπολλυμένου βίοιτοιο.

Ibid. ii. 187-189.

⁶ Mal. iv. 5.

⁷ "How deep was the impression which he made on the mind of the nation may be judged of from the fixed belief which many centuries after prevailed, that Elijah would again appear for the relief and restoration of his country. The prophecy of Malachi was possibly at once a cause and an illustration of this belief. What it had grown to at the time of our

of these ancient prophets with the times of Messiah,¹ coupling perhaps, the mention of the law of Moses my servant² with the appearing of the *Restorer*, which immediately follows.

Lord's birth, and how continually the great Prophet was present to the expectations of the people, we do not need the evidence of the Talmud to assure us ; it is patent on every page of the Gospels. Each remarkable person, as he arrives on the scene, be his habits and characteristics what they may—the stern John equally with his gentle successor—is proclaimed to be Elijah (Matt. xvi. 14 ; Mark vi. 15 ; John i. 21). His appearance in glory on the Mount of Transfiguration does not seem to have startled the disciples. They were “sore afraid,” but not apparently surprised. On the contrary, St. Peter immediately proposes to erect a tent for the Prophet, whose arrival they had been so long expecting. Even the cry of our Lord from the cross, containing as it did but a slight resemblance to the name of Elijah, immediately suggested him to the bystanders : “He calleth for Elijah.” “Let be, let us see if Elijah will come to save him.” . . . He is recorded as having often appeared to the wise and good Rabbis—at prayer in the wilderness, or on their journeys—generally in the form of an Arabian merchant (Eisenmenger, i. 11 ; ii. 402-7). At the circumcision of a child, a seat was always placed for him, that, as the zealous champion and messenger of the “covenant” of circumcision (1 Kings xiv. 14 ; Mal. iii. 1), he might watch over the due performance of the rite. During certain prayers, the door of the house was set open, that Elijah might enter and announce the Messiah (Eisenmenger, i. 685). His coming will be three days before that of the Messiah, and on each of the three he will proclaim, in a voice which shall be heard all over the earth, peace, happiness, salvation, respectively (Eisenmenger, 696). So firm was the conviction of his speedy arrival, that when goods were found and no owner appeared to claim them, the common saying was, ‘Put them by till Elijah comes’ (Lightfoot, *Exercit.* Matt. xvii. 10 ; John i. 21). The same customs and expressions are even still in use among the stricter Jews of this and other countries. (See *Revue des deux Mondes*, xxiv. 131, etc.). —Smith's *Bibl. Dict.*

¹ “Antiqua fuit apud Judæos traditio, Mosen et Eliam temporibus Messię adparere debere.

“*Debarim rabba*, sect. 3, fol. 255. 2. Dixit Deus S. B. Mose, per vitam tuam, quemadmodum tu vitam tuam posuisti pro Israelitis temporibus V. T., sic quoque temporibus N. T., scilicet Messię, quando Eliam Prophetam ad ipsos mittam, vos duo eodem tempore venietis.

“*Tanchuma*, fol. 42. 1. Dixit Deus S. B. ad Mosen, Temporibus V. T. feci te principem super Israellem : sed temporibus N. T. quando justi venient mercedem accepturi, tu venies primus omnium.”

Schoettgen, i. 148, on Matt. xvii. 3.

² Mal. iv. 4.

It is confirmatory of our position that, at the Transfiguration—a vision intimately allied with that of the Two Witnesses—Moses and Elias appear as the precursors of the glorified Jesus, who is there revealed for the first time in the character of Messiah. In the context immediately preceding the synoptic account, Jesus had announced in the most positive terms his immediate return in the glory of his Father, with his angels, to reward every man according to his works, even before some of those then present should taste of death; and, with a view of impressing his solemn coming to judgment upon the minds of his disciples, as well as of giving them a cheering foretaste of the splendour with which his advent should be attended, after six (Luke, eight) days, He took Peter, and James, and John to a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them; his face shining as the sun and his raiment white as the light, as He subsequently appeared to John in Patmos. That this was one, and possibly the principal object for which He was transfigured, may be inferred, not only from the context which is occupied with the subject of the return, but from 2 Pet. i. 16, 17, where the writer asserts that the scene upon the holy mount was the earnest of the glory with which the coming of the Son of Man should be accompanied. “We have not (he says) followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the powerful coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” It was during this extraordinary manifestation, whilst He was, as it were, rehearsing the character He should afterwards assume, and investing Himself by anticipation with the glory in which the Son of Man should shortly be revealed, that He is seen to be accompanied by Moses and Elias; these Jewish heroes playing an important part in the prophetic anticipation of the Advent prefigured by the Transfiguration, as their imitators, the Two Witnesses, in

the event itself delineated in the Apocalypse. The correspondence of ideas and language perceptible between the two accounts show, moreover, that either the one is borrowed from the other, or that both have a foundation of common tradition. As Moses and Elias (according to St. Luke, who appears to have been familiar with the Apocalyptic narrative), speak of Christ's decease, "*which he should accomplish at Jerusalem,*" so the body of one of the Two Witnesses lies in the street of the great city "*where also their Lord was crucified.*" As the former experience a resurrection¹ so do the latter "stand upon their feet" at the expiration of the "three days and an half" (cf. Dan ix. 27). As a cloud hid them from the view of the disciples, so do the Witnesses ascend up to heaven in the cloud, and their enemies behold them. As they (the disciples) "feared when they entered the cloud," so "great fear falls upon them which saw them." As a voice comes out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son ; hear ye Him," so also do they hear a great voice from heaven saying, "Come up hither." From this coincidence of ideal conception, as well as of verbal agreement, it would seem probable that the episode of the Two Witnesses is only another phase of the scene delineated in the Synoptic Gospels. Instead, however, of regarding the Witnesses as celestial visitants sent down to encourage Jesus under the prospect of his approaching sufferings and death, the author of the Apocalypse prefers to consider them as the martyred precursors of his glorious appearing in the last and perilous times. From the consideration therefore that the Two Witnesses are eminent apostles holding an important position in the Church at Jerusalem, that they are associated with Moses and Elias at the Transfiguration, that they are the heralds of the Second Advent "in the spirit and power of Elias," as the Baptist was the harbinger of the first coming

¹ It was further believed, although with some hesitation, that neither of them experienced death ; Elijah having been taken up to heaven by a whirlwind, and Moses, according to Josephus, having disappeared in a certain valley near the mount called Abarim, while he was conversing with Eleazar and Joshua.

of Jesus, and that popular expectation connected the appearing of one, if not of both of these Hebrew champions, before "the great and terrible day of the Lord," we are led to the conclusion that the seer of Patmos portrayed the two apostolic men who alone could answer to these conditions (for John, as the writer of the book, must be omitted), and could fulfil the requirements of the Apocalyptic symbol. It need scarcely be said that the picture here drawn cannot be submitted to the test of historical proof. We have no hesitation, therefore, in expressing the opinion that the Two Witnesses, like the Beast and the False Prophet, are imaginary persons, whose marvellous career is to be traced to the fanciful conceptions of the times. It gives force to this consideration, that after centuries spent in the fruitless endeavour to solve the mystery, no satisfactory interpretation has been found for them, and from the circumstance that no two individuals have answered to the description in past ages, it is reasonable to infer that none will answer to it in those which have to come.

"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven ; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars : and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven ; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth : and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron : and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. And there was war in heaven : Michael and his angels fought against the dragon ; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not ; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world : he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ : for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”—REV. xii.

During the period in which the Witnesses prophesy and the Gentiles tread down the holy city, the Woman (the Church) flies for protection into the wilderness. This symbol is attached to the preceding by identity of periods,¹ and must therefore be examined in connection with it. With the commencement of this chapter, St. John sees a great wonder in heaven; a “Woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars,”—an evident allusion to Gen. xxxvii. 9, and denoting the whole family of Jacob.² The Woman is represented as “being with child, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.” Before however, this can take place, “a great red dragon,³ having

¹ It is remarkable that the periods of the Apocalypse are of equal duration. The Gentiles tread under foot the holy city forty and two months. The Witnesses prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. The Woman is fed in the wilderness for the same period, or as expressed in other terms, “for a time, times, and half a time.” Power is given to the Beast to continue forty and two months. The Ascension of Isaiah approaches closely to the Apocalyptic number: “Et dominabitur tres annos, septemque menses, diesque viginti septem” (iv. 12). Hippolytus observes, “These are the 1260 days, even the half week, during which the tyrant will rule, persecuting the Church as she flies from city to city.”—*Opera*, ed. Fabricii, p. 30.

² Λαὸς ὁ δωδεκάφυλος.

³ The great red dragon is Satan, “the god of this world,” who gives to the Beast “his power, and his seat, and great authority.” Hence he is

seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads, whose tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth,"¹ stands before the Woman to devour her child as soon as it was born; an allusion, probably, to the escape of Jesus from the Satanic attempt of Herod upon the young child's life.² The man-child, who is about to rule all nations with a rod of iron,³ is, beyond all controversy, the Messianic King, the child of his nation, to whom is given "power over the nations";⁴ his being caught up "to God and to his throne," having also a plain reference to the resurrection of Him who is "the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth."⁵ This symbol of the Woman in the wilderness is analogous to that of the woman mourning in the field,⁶ explained of "Sion our mother, full of heaviness, much humbled, mourning very sore." As the former, after tedious and painful travail, is delivered of a man-child, so does the latter bear a son after a barrenness of thirty years. As the child of the former is exposed to deadly peril as soon as it is born, so that of the latter falls down suddenly in his wedding chamber, and dies, a circumstance interpreted of "the destruction that came to Jerusalem." As the former is nourished, perhaps by the Two Witnesses,⁷ so is the latter comforted by the prophet Esdras. As the fugitive and persecuted Woman is changed into the Bride, the Lamb's wife, explained of the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, so the woman mourning in the field is transformed of a sudden into a "city builded, and a large place showing itself from the foundations."

Foiled in his attempt upon the life of the infant Jesus, that "old Serpent, called the Devil, and Satan," next assails the Woman which brought forth the man-child. She, however,

described by emblems similar to those of the Beast (xiii. 1-9) showing his connection with the Roman Kingdom.

¹ Cf. Dan. viii. 10.

² *Orac. Sybill.* viii. 248.

³ Rev. i. 5.

⁴ S. Ign. ad Eph. xix.

⁵ Rev. ii. 26, 27.

⁶ 2 Esdras ix. 38; x. 50.

⁷ Rev. xii. 6.

flies into the wilderness for safety, into her place, "where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent,"—a flight suggested by that of Elijah from Jezebel; the feeding of the Woman in the "place prepared of God" being also prefigured by the miraculous support afforded to the prophet in his divinely selected retreat. The persecution instituted by this ringleader of the triple enemies¹ of the Church is shadowed forth by the casting down of Satan to earth to inaugurate the atrocities of the last times. This expulsion is graphically described under the magnificent symbol of "war in heaven;" the hosts of the living God meeting, army against army, with the powers of hell and darkness. To use the sublime language of Milton and St. John, "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon: and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not: neither was their place found any more in heaven." Here again we are carried back to the Maccabæan age and to the book of that ancient prophet of which the Apocalypse is the voice and echo. Once more "Michael, the great prince which standeth up for the children of the holy people," contends against the adversary of the latter days as he contended against the Antichrist of the pre-Christian period. The issue of the contest is not left in doubt. The dragon is cast out of heaven, and his angels with him, and the song of triumph of which the first notes had been already heard² is taken up afresh: "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ, for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God, day and night . . . Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them."³

Ejected from the heaven of the victorious martyrs, who "overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and who loved not their lives unto the death," the adversary is cast down into the earth, and the mournful plaint is heard, anticipatory of the coming sorrows,

¹ Rev. xvi. 13.² Rev. xi. 15.³ Rev. xii. 10-13.

“Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea : for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” The result of this casting down of Satan is the extreme distress of the Church, for “when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the Woman which brought forth the man-child.” To the Woman, however, are given the two wings of the great eagle, to aid her in her escape to the wilderness, an idea which probably owes its foundation to the migration of the Christian Church to Pella “before the (Jewish) war,”¹ and to the facilities of escape afforded by Vespasian. With a further effort at her destruction, Satan casts out of his mouth water, as a flood, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood ;² but the earth helps the Woman, and possibly, by means of an earthquake, swallows up the flood which the dragon casts out of his mouth³—an allusion to some unknown event, possibly to some ineffectual pursuit of the fugitives by the Jews. Defeated in his attempt to submerge the Church (for the 144,000 have yet to stand with the Lamb upon Mount Sion), the dragon makes war with the remnant of her seed, who “keep the commandments of God (the Mosaic law), and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

¹ Eus. iii. 5.² ποταμοφόρητον.³ Psalm lxxiv. 13.

CHAPTER VII.

ANTICHRIST.

THE Apocalypse appears to have been written under circumstances of an unusually stirring character ; the persecutions in which the writer had borne a part being associated in his mind with a more terrible ordeal then supposed to be imminent, and the political upheavings at that time shaking the nations with the arrival of a catastrophe which should convulse the world. In addition to existing causes of anxiety, anticipations of a strange and fearful nature contributed to increase the general alarm. As at a previous period of Jewish history a notable persecutor of the Church (Antiochus Epiphanes) had inflicted incalculable injuries upon the holy people, so now it was confidently expected that a new adversary, whose form was suggested by that of the Syrian tyrant, would again enter into conflict with the saints of the Most High, and after the commission of unparalleled atrocities, be vanquished and overthrown. This enemy of whom an intense dread prevailed for many centuries in the Church, is presented under the form of one of the seven heads of the Beast ascending out of the sea, explained in the book itself of one of the seven kings of Rome, xiii. 1-10.

I. THE BEAST ASCENDING OUT OF THE SEA.

“ And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion : and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death ; and his deadly wound was healed : and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast : and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast ? who is able to make war with him ? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies ;

and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them : and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity : he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.”—Rev. xiii. 1-10.

The symbols by which the Beast ascending out of the sea is delineated, are partly accommodated from the Book of Daniel,¹ and partly taken from the Beast's peculiar idiosyncrasy. As the elder prophet beholds four great Beasts or kingdoms rise up out of the sea, so does his Apocalyptic imitator, standing upon the sand of the sea, behold a Beast (the Roman kingdom) rise up out of the same mighty element. Following the triple order² of its Danielic pre-

¹ It is worthy of notice that in the parallelism between the Book of Daniel and the Apocalypse, the symbols of the latter are the result of imitation rather than an exact delineation of the subjects they are intended to portray. Thus the horns of the Roman Beast are “ten,” not because they are ten in number, but because the fourth Beast of Daniel is furnished with ten horns. The same Beast is also said to be like a leopard, a bear, and a lion, more for the sake of resemblance to the Beasts of Daniel than of accurate description. The duration of the Antichristian persecution continues “forty and two months,” or “a time, times, and an half,” a period which was also that of the desolation of Antiochus. The Antichristian adversary is destroyed by the Coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven, because the Beast (Antiochus) is destroyed at the coming of a Son of Man to the Ancient of days. The Millennial reign commences after the defeat of Antichrist and his armies, because the saints possess the kingdom after the destruction of the Danielic Beast.

² The threefold condition of the risen Jesus is frequently insisted upon by the writer of the Apocalypse. As the existence of the Almighty is represented by the threefold figure, “which is, and which was, and which is to come” (i. 4), and by the adoring song of the host of heaven, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come ;” so also Messiah, who is set down with Him upon his throne, is designated, “The faithful witness, the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth” (i. 5). “The first and the last, he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore” (i. 17, 18) ;

cedents, it combines the symbols of the leopard, the bear, and the lion : it has also ten horns, and upon the horns ten crowns. In addition to the features which it has in common with the earlier prophet, the Beast is furnished with seven heads, significant of the seven hills and the seven Emperors of Rome.¹ One of these heads St. John beholds as it were wounded to death, yet subsequently healed—an event which introduces the mystery of the Apocalypse, and which can only be interpreted of the expected return of Nero after the commission of his suicidal act. The dragon (Satan) who, like the Beast rising up out of the sea, is also furnished with seven heads and ten horns,—showing his connection with the Roman empire—gives to the Beast “his power, and his seat

“The first and the last, which was dead, and is alive” (ii. 8) ; “The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God” (iii. 14). This threefold condition is shared in hideous parody by the Beast, who imitates the qualities of Messiah: hence he is described as the Beast rising up out of the sea, ascending out of the bottomless pit, and coming up out of the earth ; as the Beast that was but is no longer emperor, as not yet come but soon to ascend out of the bottomless pit, as the eighth king who follows the returning Nero ; as the Dragon (or Nero), the Beast (or Antichrist), and the False Prophet (or Pseudo-Nero), combining in one mysterious name the triple enemies of the Church. And as the Apocalyptic drama draws to a close, it must be confessed that the latter portion is occupied with a powerful contrast between Jesus and Nero. Two armies appear upon the scene whose leaders are the respective champions. Two cities are involved in their success or failure. The antagonism between them is continued to the cities which they represent, and the picture of the New Jerusalem is drawn in marked opposition to Great Babylon.

¹ The interpretation of the seven kings given by M. Renan is not a little confused. In his opinion, the seven kings are Julius Cæsar, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, and Galba. “The first five are dead ; Galba reigns for the time ; but he is old and feeble and will soon fall. The sixth, Nero, who is at the same time the Beast and one of the seven kings, is not really dead, but will reign again, though only for a short time ; thus he will become the eighth king, and then will perish.” It will be observed that after placing Nero before Galba in the list of the seven kings and designating him as the sixth, the writer asserts that Galba reigns for the time before his predecessor Nero. He further adds that Nero who is not really dead, but has again to reign, will thus become the eighth king

(Rome) and great authority." This doubtless refers to the belief that the kingdoms of the heathen world were under the dominion of Satan, "the god of this world" (Luke iv. 6), for "they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast, and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" The blasphemies attributed to the Beast (for upon his heads there is the name of blasphemy) are in strict keeping with the notable impieties of the Roman emperors, who for the most part received Divine honours after their death; and of Nero especially, it is said, that adoration was paid to him during his lifetime.¹ The war against the saints which "continues" forty and two months, corresponds with the duration of the Antichristian tribulation for the same period (xi. 2; xii. 6).

leaving out all mention of the "other who is not yet come, and who when he cometh must continue a short space." But it may be asked, If Galba reigns before Nero, how can Nero be the sixth king? Again, if Nero is the sixth king who is not really dead, "the other who is not yet come and who when he cometh must continue a short space" must surely be the seventh, and not the eighth. A more suitable interpretation is furnished by the book itself. Contemporaneously with the re-appearing Nero, "Another Beast comes up out of the earth who exerciseth all the power of the first Beast before him." The title given to him, "The beast that was and is not," is usually employed to denote the Roman emperor (xvii. 8) of whom he is the counterpart and *alter ego*: he is called the "eighth" king because he is preceded by the sixth who "is," and the seventh who is "not yet come": he is "of the seven" inasmuch as he is or affects to be one of the seven kings of Rome; and "he goeth into perdition" like the dragon and the Beast. These qualities, it is conceived, meet in Pseudo-Nero, who seems to be a necessary complement to an intelligent conception of the Apocalyptic mystery.

¹ "In the journals of the senate I find an entry by which it appears that Cerealis Anicius, consul elect, moved in his place that a temple should be raised at the public expense to the Deified Nero, who, in his opinion, had risen above the condition of human nature, and was therefore entitled to religious worship."—Tac. *Ann.* xv. 74. As an instance of the worship offered to his statue we may also mention the circumstance related by the same historian of Tiridates laying down his regal diadem at the foot of it. "The two armies (says Tacitus) were drawn out with great military pomp. On one side stood the Parthian cavalry, ranged in battalions, with all the pride of Eastern magnificence. The Roman legions appeared on

The power given unto the Beast over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations, agrees with the universal homage paid to the great adversary, while the worship offered to him finds an answer in the compulsory adoration of the image of Nero.

But whilst we interpret the Beast rising up out of the sea of the Roman Empire, which is in fact the germ out of which the conception of Antichrist proceeds, we are not unmindful of the fact that the prominent place in the prophecy is occupied by the great adversary who assumes the shape of that remarkable head among the seven emperors to whom the mysterious attributes of existence and of non-existence can alone apply.¹ It must be admitted however that the writer has exhibited a want of distinctness in confounding²

the opposite ground, the eagles glittering to the eye, the banners displayed, and the images of the gods in regular order forming a kind of temple. In the centre stood a tribunal, and upon it a curule chair supporting the statue of Nero. Tiridates approached. Having immolated victims with the usual rites, he took the diadem from his brow and laid it at the foot of the statue."—*Ann.* xv. 29. "On his entrance into Rome, on returning from Greece, sacrifices were offered to him all along the road. He counted it a crime in Thrascas that he did not offer to his Divine voice."—Döllinger. The honours accorded to Nero upon his return to Rome almost surpass belief. The walls of cities were thrown down to admit his triumphal entrance. The 1808 crowns which he had won in contests of the amphitheatre were displayed in the Circus. The air resounded with the cries, "Victor in the Olympic games, Victor in the Pythian, Augustus, Augustus, to Nero-Hercules, to Nero-Apollo, Sole Victor in the whole cycle of games (*Periodonice*), Sacred Voice, Happy those who hear thee."

¹ We are disposed to explain the mysterious qualities ascribed to the first Beast "which *has* the wound of the sword and lived," by a popular rumour current at the period, that Nero was about to return as Antichrist and at the head of his Parthian and other allies would ravage the Italian territory and destroy Rome. The first indication of this popular expectation is perhaps that of Dio Chrysostom, who says, apparently of the partisans of Nero, "Even now all wish, and some suppose him alive." Tacitus, about A.D. 70, asserts that "Achaia and Asia were terrified as if Nero were coming, reports being various respecting his death; many on this ground believing that he was still alive—hence numbers asserted that Nero survived the fury of his enemies (many impostors actually personating that emperor), and they found credulity ready to believe them" (*Hist.* ii. 8).

² The symbol of the Beast "rising up out of the sea" (the heathen

the wounded Beast with the Beast rising up out of the sea ; and this confusion is still more apparent in the following symbol where the qualities attributed to the "*first beast*," are those of an individual, and his number is "that of a man." But whilst the symbol of "the beast rising out of the sea" is the germ out of which the conception of Antichrist proceeds, it is plain that by that of "the beast whose deadly wound was healed," the seer drew the picture of that Roman emperor whose bitter persecution of the Christian Church made him an object of intense abhorrence ; and perhaps it would be difficult to find one more suited to play the part of the great adversary¹ than the tyrant of whom it was said by Augustine,

world) is capable of a double application, and may be interpreted either of the Roman kingdom or of that imperial head which it is the principal object of the book to describe. After a brief notice of the element from which the seven-headed, ten-horned Beast arises, the similarity of the emblems by which it is described to those of the Four Great Beasts of Daniel, the power, seat, and authority conferred on it by Satan, and its worship of Rome and Augustus (representations which seem chiefly to refer to the kingdom out of which the Beast arises)—the symbol passes on to call particular attention to that remarkable head among the seven kings which was "wounded to death and whose deadly wound was healed," or in other words, to Nero re-appearing as Antichrist, at whom "all the world should wonder" (xvii. 8). In this revived condition it is said of him that he should speak great things and blasphemies, should continue forty and two months (xi. 2, 3), should make war with the saints and overcome them (xi. 7), and should be universally worshipped (xiii. 15). It will be observed that there is a confusion in the figures employed in the symbol which has led interpreters to explain the Beast rising up out of the sea exclusively of the Roman kingdom ; but that the Beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads, and ten horns, and upon the horns ten crowns (xvii. 12), and upon his heads the name of blasphemy, is also identical with Nero, is evident from xvii. 3, 7 ; where the Beast that carrieth the Woman (Rome) subsequently explained of Nero (xvii. 8-11) is "full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." Added to this the Beast "rising up out of the sea" is twice called "the *first beast*" (xiii. 13), and his number is that "of a *man*" (xiii. 15).

¹ "His (Commodianus) Antichrist is Nero returned from the lower world accompanied by the false prophet (Apoc. xiii. 11, sqq.) who claims to be the Messiah and is worshipped as God" (Döllinger). Victorinus describes him as "*suscitatum*," and at a later period Augustine uses the word "*resurrecturum*." The apocryphal Apocalypse of Esdras declares

"*Cujus jam facta velut Antichristi videbantur*," whose deeds already seemed as those of Antichrist.

2. THE BEAST ASCENDING OUT OF THE EARTH.

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth ; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast ; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads : and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast : for it is the number of a man ; and his number is six hundred threescore and six."—Rev. xiii. 11-18.

We are free to confess that among the mysteries of the Apocalypse few are surrounded with greater difficulty, or have been made the subject of more unsatisfactory exegetical treatment, than that of which we are about to attempt an interpretation. While the local area as well as the official character occupied by the first Beast, "whose deadly wound was healed," are set forth by symbols of so distinct a kind as almost to preclude further explanation, the *data* seem hardly given with sufficient clearness to fix the position to be assigned to the Beast "coming up out of the earth." At the outset then it may be well to bear in mind, that as the first Beast is a fictitious and not a real adversary ; so the Beast

that "The opposer (ὁ ἀντικείμενος) shall ascend from Tartarus and shall show many (wonderful) things to men." The apocryphal Apocalypse of John declares, "Then shall appear the denier (ὁ ἀπνηγής) the one kept apart in the darkness, who is called Antichrist." The Sibyl represents Antichrist under the name of Belial as arising out of the Cæsars (ἑκ Σεβαστηνῶν), and performing notable yet deceptive miracles (*Orac. Sibyll.* iii. 63-70).

ascending out of the earth has an existence only in the imagination of the writer.

We are first struck by the circumstance that the second Beast comes up "*out of the earth*"—the abode of departed souls,—an idea which would appear to have its origin 1 Sam. xxviii., where Samuel is evoked from the dead to execute the prophetic office before Saul. He exercises a power supposed to be inherent in those who had experienced such a metempsychosis (cf. Mark vi. 14-16), and works prodigious miracles ¹ before ² the first Beast. In a word, the office of the second Beast is to exalt Antichrist and to compel all that dwell upon the earth to worship his image,³ "whose names

¹ Et postquam elapsa erit (illa ætas) descendet Berial, magnus angelus, rex hujus mundi, quem possedit a tempore primæ collocationis, et descendet a suo firmamento sub specie hominis, *regis impii, interfectoris suæ matris*, nempe regis hujus mundi. . . . Angelus ille Berial, iste rex veniet, cumque eo venient omnes potestates hujus mundi, et servient ei in omnibus quæ voluerit. Et ejus voce exorietur sol noctu, atque is efficiet ut luna sextâ horâ appareat. Et omnia quæ voluerit facere in mundo, faciet; et compellabit Dilectum, dicetque, Ego sum Deus, et ante me non fuit non aliquis. Et in eum credet unusquisque homo in mundo. Et ei sacrificabunt, eique subservient, dicentes illum esse Deum præterque illum esse nullum. . . . Et potestas prodigiorum ejus erit in singulis urbibus et regionibus. Et eriget suum simulacrum ante faciem suam (cf. *ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ*, Rev. xiii. 12) in omnibus urbibus. Et dominabitur tres annos, septemque menses, diesque viginti septem." . . .

"Et post trecentos triginta tres dies Dominus veniet cum suis angelis cumque potestatibus sanctis e septimo cœlo, splendore septimi cœli, et trahet Berial in Gehennam ac ejus potestates. . . . Tunc vox Dilecti increpabit iracunde hoc cœlum, hancque terram, et montes, et colles, et urbes, et deserta, et septentrionem, et angelum solis (Cf. Rev. xix. 17), et lunam, et omnia ubi Berial apparuerit, atque manifestum se fecerit in hoc mundo. Et resurrectio erit, judiciumque inter illos in istis diebus; et Dilectus efficiet ut ascendat ignis ab ipso consumatque omnes scelestos, et erunt tanquam si non fuissent creati. Et reliquæ narrationis visionis scriptæ sunt in visione Babylonis."—*Ascensio Isaïæ Vatis*, iv. 1-19.

² The phrase *ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ* does not necessarily mean "his local presence," but also has the signification of "on his behalf," or, "on his account." Cf. *ἐνώπιον τοῦ Κυρίου*, before the *Lord* of the earth (xi. 4).

³ It is probable that allusion is made to this idolatry (2 Thess. ii. 4) where it said, "God shall send them strong delusion—*ἐνέργειαν πλάνης*—a deceitful worker—that they should believe a (the) lie," or, the idol, *τῷ ψεύδει*.

are not written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb slain." Hence he allies himself with the first Beast as his witness and prophet, takes the part of Antichrist against Messiah, as Jannes and Jambres take the part of Pharaoh against Moses, and as Balaam encourages Balak against Israel. Hence, too, he institutes an invidious comparison between Messiah and Antichrist and claims a superiority for the latter. As Messiah hath a name "which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it;" so the arch-deceiver ascribes to the Beast a mysterious name which demands "wisdom" for its elucidation. As the servants of Messiah are sealed in their foreheads; so, the worshippers of the Beast "receive his mark on their foreheads and upon their hands." As the Lamb is worshipped by "every creature in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea;" so, all men are compelled to worship the image of the Beast. As the Lamb is represented *as it had been* slain, so the Beast is *as it were* wounded to death.

Further, as Messiah has his Two Witnesses, so Antichrist has his False Prophet, and the latter repeats the prodigies of the former. As "fire proceedeth out of the mouth (of the former) and devoureth their enemies;" so the Beast "makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men." As the Witnesses "have power to shut heaven, to turn water into blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues," so the Beast "deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the Beast." As the spirit of life from God enters into the slain witnesses; so the image of the Beast is endued with life, and made to speak; the features of Messiah and his Witnesses being counterfeited in those of the Beast and his False Prophet, and the "mystery of godliness" travestied in the "mystery of iniquity."

We have already supposed that the symbol of the first Beast "whose deadly wound was healed," has a foundation in historical fact; we shall therefore look for a similar pre-

cedent in the case of the Beast "rising up out of the earth ;" and, strange as it may be, an extraordinary event which took place at that time seems to furnish a solution of the Apocalyptic enigma.

It is related by Tacitus¹ and by Dion Cassius² that an impostor appeared shortly after the death of Nero, who gave out that he was that Emperor, whose return was at that time enthusiastically expected (for it was said by some that he had not killed himself by his suicidal act but had taken refuge among the Parthians), and whom in manner and person he closely resembled. He established himself, says M. Renan,³ in the island of Cythnos, one of the Cyclades, where he assembled an army, exercised regal authority, caused cruel executions to be made, and armed the slaves. All Asia and Achaia were terrified⁴ at the return of the tyrant ("wondered after the beast"), and the event aroused intense excitement especially among the common people to whom the thought of Nero was a source of terror. Hence the most absurd rumours were circulated respecting him, and the belief prevailed that nothing had been seen as yet compared with what was about to follow. The reign, however, of the impostor was but of short duration. Calpurnius Asprenas, the governor of Galatia and Pamphylia, landed at Cythnos ; when, having vainly endeavoured to seduce the soldiers of Asprenas by the magic name of Nero, the pseudo-emperor was taken and slain. To convince the partisans of Nero that no future return was to be expected, his dead body was carried about the provinces of Asia, and taken even to Rome.

It may be asked, In what particulars does this event serve as a foundation for the Apocalyptic symbol? The reappearing Nero starts up, as it were, from the lower world, and in

¹ Hist. xi. 8, 9.

² lxiv. 9.

³ L'Antéchrist, pp. 351-353, 436-438.

⁴ "Achaia atque Asia falso exterritæ velut Nero adventaret . . . late terror . . . multis ad celebritatem nominis erectis . . . gliscentem indies famam."—(*Tac. Hist.* ii. 8-9).

this respect corresponds with "The beast rising up out of the earth"—the abode of disembodied spirits. He is called "Another beast" because he is the impersonification, the *alter ego* of the first Beast "whose deadly wound was healed." He has "two horns" emblematical of two kings, the real, and the false Nero, whom he combines in his own person. (Cf. "The ram which had two horns," Dan. viii. 3.) He takes the form of a lamb in imitation of the gentle qualities of Messiah; but speaks haughtily as a dragon, "that great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns," significant of Imperial Rome, of which city the false Nero claims the dominion. Assuming the title and the *prestige* of royalty, he "exercises all the power of the first beast before him"—an act which could only be affirmed of an Imperial successor. He is called the False *Prophet* in contradistinction to the true *Prophet* (Samuel), not only because he arises from the same subterranean abode, but because he is the advocate of Nero-worship and the high-priest of a false Deity. By virtue of his resuscitated condition "mighty works do show forth themselves in him," and he performs prodigious miracles before the Beast with a view to his exaltation, as the miracles of the Two Witnesses are wrought to exalt Messiah. With this object he erects a statue¹ to the Beast, causes it to speak by means of ventriloquism, or by some other way, and compels all that dwell on the earth to worship it; an act only paralleled by that of Nebuchadnezzar. In accordance with the practice of kings and emperors towards their slaves and soldiers, he imprints a mark on the right hand and forehead of "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond," and issues at the same time a prohibition which has the character of an imperial edict, forbidding them to procure the necessities of life, except with money stamped with the mark, or name, or

¹ Suetonius says, "There were not wanting those who for a long time decked his grave with spring and summer flowers, and set up in the rostrum at one time *his images dressed in robes*; at another time his edicts as if he were still living and soon to return to the great discomfiture of his foes."—*In Nerone*.

number of the Beast—an abomination equivalent to idolatry in the eyes of the Jewish Christians. Associated with the Dragon and the Beast he gathers together the kings of the whole world to “the battle of that great day of God Almighty,” occupies a position second only to that of the Beast himself, and is consigned with him to the pit of destruction.

In a word, he is *Nero redivivus*, the very image and personification of the first Beast, whose sanguinary edicts he imitates, whose laws he upholds, whose powers he exercises, and whose title he assumes. It is conceived that these high functions are more in accordance with qualities like those possessed by Nero than with those attributed to a magician like Simon Magus,¹ with whom the Beast ascending up out of the earth is not unfrequently confounded, and that the symbol may be more fairly interpreted of imperial than of supernatural agency. Finally, he is miserably slain, and “goeth into perdition.”

We think it probable that this extraordinary event which, at the time of the writing of the book was a subject of general interest, may have supplied a foundation for the symbol of the Beast rising up out of the earth ; or, as some have thought, out of the region of Asia, the birth-place of false Neros. The current report of Nero’s return may have sensibly affected the writer of the Apocalypse, and this alarm may have been increased by his proximity to the events related : the island of

¹ Some have thought the symbol of the second Beast may be interpreted of Simon Magus, who according to Hippolytus was buried alive at his own request, in the assurance that he would rise again as Messiah on the third day ; and who pretended he could assume the appearance of a serpent, exhibit himself with two faces, and transform himself into whatever shape he pleased. Irenæus also speaks of magic arts practised by Simon to ingratiate himself with Nero ; and Justin Martyr declares that Simon, a Samaritan, performed many magic rites by the operation of demons. Suetonius observes, “He himself (Nero) was surrounded by Jewish magicians and soothsayers, who assured him, connecting the prediction with the expected Messiah, that, after his fall, he would become ruler of Jerusalem, and live to see from thence the restoration of his former power.” The most remarkable circumstance applied to him in connection with the Apocalypse, is that he boasts of having moved statues, “*Ego statuas moveri fici*” (Cf. Rev. xiii. 15).

Patmos, according to M. Renan, being not more than forty leagues from Cythnos, the scene of the attempt of the impostor. It will be observed that there is a marked resemblance between the Two Beasts, and that both are modifications of one imperial power upon earth. To use the words of the Rev. Albert Barnes, who it is needless to say applies the symbols to totally different objects: "It is the same general domination *prolonged*; that is, the one is, in another form, but the *continuation* of the other. The one becomes weak, or is in some way likely to lose its authority and power, and is *revived* by the other; that is, the other restores its waning authority, and sets up substantially the same dominion again over the earth, and causes the same great power to be acknowledged on the earth. The one *runs into* the other; that is, one naturally produces, or is followed by the other. One *sustains* the other. They therefore have a very close relation to each other; having the same object, possessing the same general characteristics, and accomplishing substantially the same thing on the earth." Viewed in this light, the episode of the false Nero not only suits the requirements of the symbol, but fits in with the common belief of the period.

The number of the Beast's name denoted by the monogram $\chi\xi\varsigma$, whose numerical value is "six hundred, threescore and six," may now be said to be ascertained with a considerable amount of certainty; the solution of this cabalistic problem being discoverable in the Hebrew letters of the words Nero Cæsar.¹ The employment in this case of Hebrew letters may be traced to the effort after concealment which pervades the

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{1 } \text{נ} = 50 \\
 \text{ך} = 200 \\
 \text{ו} = 6 \\
 \text{י} = 50 \\
 \text{ק} = 100 \\
 \text{ס} = 60 \\
 \text{ר} = 200 \\
 \hline
 666
 \end{array}$$

The omission of the final $\text{י} = 50$ at the end of the Latin form of the word Nero, reduces the number to 616, the variation preserved by Irenæus.

Apocalypse. Hence, Rome is Babylon, and Nero, the head "wounded to death, whose deadly wound was healed." A further reason for selecting the Imperial name may be gathered from the circumstance that the marks (στίγματα) of emperors alone could be branded upon the hands of soldiers (Ælian), and that the prohibition forbidding the exercise of civil rights till they had sacrificed to the detestable idols of old Rome seems best to harmonize with the edicts of the Roman tyrants. Such then is the result at which we arrive from the examination of these unique and abstruse symbols.¹ The ideas they convey appear to have been suggested to the writer's mind by the extraordinary events then taking place and out of which he formed still more wonderful anticipations for the future. As the exegetical history of the book abundantly shows, they defy the records of any other period to furnish an adequate solution. The wards are so complicated that no key but the true one can fit the lock; and it appears strange when an exposition can be given suited to the requirements of the case, that interpreters should travel out of their way for far-fetched theories which offend the intelligence of a child.

¹ It is within the range of credibility that the symbol of the Beast "coming up out of the earth" should be interpreted of Pseudo-Nero. It is true that a return of the wounded Beast was hourly expected; but this alarming event does not appear to have already taken place, for the adversary is described as "*not yet come*," and as "*about to ascend* out of the bottomless pit." At this juncture all the world is astonished by the sudden appearance of one who, like Perkin Warbeck, personates the deceased emperor, and exchanges his former state for a royal condition. If it could be thought consistent to explain the same symbol of Otho, because he imitated the career of Nero, with how much greater propriety may it be interpreted of Pseudo-Nero, who "exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him," and at whom "all they that dwell upon the earth (all Asia and Achaia) should wonder."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SEVEN VIALS.

“And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder : and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps : and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders : and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women ; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile : for they are without fault before the throne of God. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him ; for the hour of his judgment is come : and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb : and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever : and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints : here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them. And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle and reap : for the time is come for thee to reap ; for the harvest of the

earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth ; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire ; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth ; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.”—Rev. xiv.

A PRINCIPAL office of the False Prophet was to procure homage for the image of the Beast, *i.e.*, the statue of Nero. This deification of the deceased Roman Emperors had been prevalent from the time of Augustus ; similar apotheoses having previously obtained among the Seleucidæ and the Ptolemies. Statues of the reigning monarch of Rome, according to Josephus, were set up by Herod in Cæsarea : Caligula sent Petronius with an army to place his statue in the temple at Jerusalem—an act of a highly aggravating character, which nearly led to a revolt of the Jews ; and Pontius Pilate sent by night those images of Cæsar which are called ensigns into Jerusalem. There is no evidence to show that a similar act of profanity was attempted by Nero ; but as he surpassed his predecessors in impiety, it may be assumed that the practice was not discontinued. It is well known that the test to which the early Christians were submitted was the worship of the statue of the Emperor, or death. Polycarp was subjected to this ordeal (Eus. Hist. iv. 15) ; and Pliny, in his celebrated letter to Trajan, asserts that this was his usual plan for ascertaining whether accused persons were Christians or not. It is in accordance with this established custom that we are told in the Apocalypse that “as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.” Against this most hateful form of idolatry the seer of Patmos directs his bitterest anathema, and as is common to the writer, puts it in the form of antithesis. This is abundantly exemplified in the passage of which we are about to offer an explanation.

A magnificent and triumphant vision is presented in this chapter of the 144,000 sealed out of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel standing with their victorious Messiah upon Mount Zion. Contrasted with these guileless and faultless ones the picture is then exhibited of the worshippers of the Beast and his image. The former stand in triumph with the Lamb upon Mount Zion ; the latter are trodden down "without the city" (Jerusalem), and "blood comes out of the winepress even unto the horse bridles by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs"—the computed length it is said of the Holy Land. The former have the Father's name written on their foreheads (Rev. vii. 3 ; xiv. 1) ; the latter have the mark of the Beast in their foreheads and in their hands (xiii. 16, 17 ; xiv. 9 ; xvi. 2 ; xix. 20 ; xx. 24). The former sing the new song which no man but the redeemed could learn ; the latter are tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. The former are distinguished by a title expressive of purity, which in after ages was the customary appellation ¹ of the writer of the Apocalypse himself, the latter drink of the wine of the wrath of God. The former inherit the promise especially welcome to those who died before Christ's second advent, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth," the latter "have no rest day nor night, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever."

This sublime contrast is succeeded by the glorious advent of the Son of man seated on a white cloud to reap the harvest of the earth (for the harvest of the earth is ripe), and the vintage is cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God. The terrors, however, about to fall upon the worship-

¹ "Cui (ad Johannem) Petrus respondit : Tu solus ex nobis *virgo* es electus a Domino, et tantam gratiam invenisti ut super pectus ejus recumbens" (Transitus Beatæ Mariæ. B. xi). Ἀποκάλυψις τοῦ ἁγίου καὶ ἐνδοξότατου Ἀπόστολου καὶ Εὐαγγελίστου, Παρθένου ἡγαπημένου ἐπιστήθιον, Ἰωάννου Θεόλογου." MS. 12th century,

pers of the Beast and his image are not exhausted, but are resolved into a new phase of woe symbolized by the pouring out of seven Vials, as the seventh Seal had been drawn out into seven Trumpets. Notwithstanding a remarkable identity¹ between them, to which the reader's attention has been called in a former chapter, it cannot be too strongly urged that the respective symbols point to distinct events; the former to partial and mitigated calamities falling upon Judea and Jerusalem; the latter to the complete and irremediable destruction which should overtake the Roman kingdom and city.

“And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest. And after that I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: and the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.”—Rev. xv.

As the Trumpets which sounded the woes about to fall on the Jewish city and people are heralded by the prayers of the saints invoking vengeance upon their persecutors, so the Vials

¹ As no combination of fortuitous circumstances could have caused the woes of the first four Trumpets and Vials to fall upon similar objects of nature, so no mere force of accident could have introduced the corresponding ideas of darkness into the fifth, of armies from beyond Euphrates into the sixth, and of completion into the seventh and last of these respective symbols; and the inevitable conclusion is that the seer made use of similar prophetic images in delineating calamities which fall on different objects.

which pour out wrath upon Rome and the heathen world are introduced by the rejoicings of those "that had gotten the victory over the Beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name." Like the 144,000 who stand with the Lamb upon Mount Sion, these stand upon the sea of glass (an idea derived from the brazen sea of the Jewish temple) having the harps of God. They sing not indeed the new song which no man could learn but the 144,000 who are redeemed from the earth, but the song of Moses (after the passage of the Red Sea) and of the Lamb, and praise the King of *nations*, ἐθνῶν, for his judgments upon Babylon and Antichrist. Immediately after this, seven angels come out of the tabernacle of the testimony having the seven *last* plagues, implying that others had preceded them. These are represented as intensely severe. They are not merely partial calamities like those announced by the Trumpets, but Vials so full of Divine wrath that no greater vengeance could be added, "for in them *was filled up*, ἐτελέσθη, the wrath of God."

FIRST VIAL.

"And the first went and poured out his vial upon the earth ; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image."—Rev. xvi. 2.

The first Vial, like the first Trumpet, contains an allusion to one of the sore plagues of Egypt, that of the boils (Exod. ix. 9), which precedes the hail. This calamity is sent, not as in the Trumpet upon a third part of the trees and of the grass of the earth, but "upon the *men* which had the mark of the beast, and which worshipped his image," *i.e.* upon the heathen enemies of Messiah. No modified threatenings, no partial calamity, is poured out upon these, in this and in succeeding Vials. The seer of Patmos is dealing with inveterate and detested adversaries, and mercy no longer seasons justice.

SECOND VIAL.

“And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea ; and it became as the blood of a dead man : and every living soul died in the sea.”—Rev. xvi. 3.

In the corresponding Trumpet the third part only of the sea became blood ; the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died ; and the third part of the ships were destroyed—a circumstance peculiar to the Trumpet woes, and significant of modified calamities. In the Vial, the desolation is complete, for “every living soul dies in the sea.” The corruption also of the mighty element is more loathsome in the Vial than in the Trumpet, for it becomes “as the blood of a corpse,” showing the intensification of the latter plague.

THIRD VIAL.

“And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of water ; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and was, and shalt be, because Thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink ; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar, say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.”—Rev. xvi. 4-7.

Here again, as in previous instances, a marked difference is apparent between the respective Trumpet and Vial. In the former, a third part only of the rivers and fountains of waters is smitten ; in the latter, no exception is made to the general calamity. In the former, the waters are made bitter, and “many die” from partaking of them ; in the latter, men drink blood instead of bitter waters, and it is inferred that all perish. The application of this Vial to the Roman persecutors of the chosen people is most palpable and certain ; and their judgment is declared to be just, because they have “shed the blood of saints and prophets”—a charge repeatedly preferred against the heathen enemies of the Church (Rev. xvii. 6 ; xviii. 20 ; xix. 2). This sentence, so fairly

deserved, is re-echoed by a voice from the altar : " Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments " (Rev. xv. 3 ; xvi. 7).

FOURTH VIAL.

" And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun, and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which have power over these plagues : and they repented not to give him glory."—Rev. xvi. 8, 9.

The reference to distinct events observable in previous Trumpets and Vials is repeated here. Under the former, a third part only of the hosts of heaven is darkened ; under the latter, men are scorched with a great heat, a far more severe infliction than partial and temporary darkness, and blaspheme the name of God because of the acuteness of their sufferings. This charge of blasphemy is applicable only to the heathen persecutors of the Church, and especially to the great Roman city which bore upon its forehead the " name of blasphemy " (Rev. xvi. 9, 11, 21 ; xvii. 3).

FIFTH VIAL.

" And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast ; and his kingdom was full of darkness ; and they gnawed their tongues for pain. And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds."—Rev. xvi. 10, 11.

The fifth Vial, with a still clearer indication of its object, is poured out on the seat, or throne, of the Beast, *i.e.* Rome ; and his kingdom is full of darkness"—an allusion perhaps to the " darkness which might be felt," which overspread the land of Egypt. In a preceding Trumpet woe a third part only of the sun, moon, and stars, was obscured ; here, on the contrary, the eclipse is total and complete. The difference of application between the respective Trumpet and Vial may be seen in the fact that the woes of the former fall upon the unbelieving Jews who have not the seal of God in their

foreheads ; and those of the latter, upon heathen Rome, and the kingdom of the Beast. The duration of the torment of the former is limited to the space of five months : the latter continue to “gnaw their tongues for pain, and to blaspheme the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores.”

SIXTH VIAL.]

“And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.”—Rev. xvi. 12-16.

With the pouring out of the sixth Vial, the great river Euphrates is dried up as when Cyrus marched his Persian troops through its empty channel and took Babylon, leaving the progress of the kings of the East to destroy the seat of the beast unopposed. This horrible invasion of the dreaded Parthians is described by emblems of an appalling character. Three unclean spirits of devils, like frogs (an allusion perhaps to the miracle of the frogs which the magicians brought up by their enchantments upon the land of Egypt, Exod. viii. 7), issue from the mouth of the Dragon (Satan), the Beast (Antichrist), and the False Prophet (Pseudo-Nero) and persuade to war, as the evil spirit persuaded Ahab (cf. 1 Kings xxii. 20-23). The place to which the three unclean spirits gather together the kings of the whole world and their armies to battle, is called in the Hebrew tongue Harmageddon—the valley of Megiddo, celebrated as the scene of the defeat of King Josiah, and significant of mourning and distress. The conflict which follows, described as “the battle of that great day of God Almighty,” is attended, as in xix. 20, with prodigious

slaughter, and terminates with a complete defeat of the triple enemies of the Church. This event introduces the consummation: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

The difference of application between the corresponding Trumpet and Vial is as marked as in those which have preceded. The woes of the former executed by horsemen from the region of the Euphrates fall upon a third part only of the Jewish people; those of the latter, inflicted by enemies also coming from beyond the Euphrates, fall upon heathen Rome (cf. Rev. xvii. 16, 17). In the former, a remnant is spared, although they did not repent: in the latter, the armies of the whole world are devoted to destruction.

SEVENTH VIAL.

"And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings: and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail: for the plague thereof was exceeding great."—Rev. xvi. 17–21.

The seventh angel pours the contents of his Vial into the air, significant, perhaps, of the conflagration of that element (2 Pet. iii. 10); and a voice is heard saying, "It is done." This is followed by "a mighty earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great." The great city, Rome, which is here contrasted with the cities of the nations, is divided into three parts,¹ and Great

¹ Rome, which here and everywhere in the Apocalypse is called "the Great City," is said to be divided into three parts, because the internal

Babylon comes, with a view to condign punishment, into remembrance before God. The cities of the nations also fall by earthquakes—an idea suggested to the writer by previous calamities.¹ A sound is heard of the approaching advent, “Behold, I come as a thief.” The consummation is, moreover, indicated, as in the corresponding Trumpet, by voices, thunders, lightnings, an earthquake, and great hail.

The characteristic point of difference between the seventh Trumpet and the seventh Vial consists in the fact that their respective denunciations fall on different cities: the former indicating the partial desolation which should befall Jerusalem; the latter, the complete destruction which should overtake Great Babylon, or Rome. The earthquakes, moreover, by which these cities are visited are unequal in extent and in severity. Of Jerusalem, a tenth part only falls, and seven thousand men (an inconsiderable number)² are destroyed (Rev. xi. 13). Of Rome, the ruin is complete and irremediable; and the convulsion by which it is attended “such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.” The effect produced by these tremendous visitations is also different. The Jews are affrighted, and give glory to the God of heaven; the heathen blaspheme God because of the hail, “for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”

The vehement indignation against Rome and the war-divisions which tore the city in pieces assumed a triple form. The Roman empire was at that time distracted by civil war. For some hours (says M. Renan) three Emperors, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, were reigning simultaneously.

¹ Eodem anno ex illustribus Asiæ urbibus, Laodicea tremore prolapsa, propriis viribus revaluit. Tac. *Ann.* xiv. 37. In Asiâ tres urbes terræ motu ceciderunt, Laodicea, Hierapolis, Colossæ. Eus. *Chr.* p. 161. Ex motu terræ celebre Campaniæ oppidum Pompeii magnâ ex parte proruit. Tac. *Ann.* xv. 22.

² A tenth part of the whole population of Jerusalem, which probably amounted to 70,000 souls. This inconsiderable number affords a proof that the destruction of the city had not then taken place; for had that event occurred, the ruin would have been more thorough and complete.

shippers of the Beast displayed in the Vials, must be set down to the Jewish predilection of the writer so conspicuously manifested in the Apocalypse. Judea is to him a sacred spot, and Jerusalem a "holy city," which, although decimated for the sin of rejecting Messiah and his Two Witnesses, nevertheless escapes total destruction. On the other hand, Rome is the centre and climax of wickedness, "The mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Above all, she is the unrelenting persecutor of the church, "drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus," and the picture of her utter desolation is drawn with a firm hand. This proclivity is nowhere more clearly discoverable than in the writer's treatment of the Trumpets and Vials; the one announcing severe, yet mitigated judgments upon the Jewish nation and city, the other fulminating implacable and eternal wrath against the Roman people and the Roman metropolis. These considerations forbid us to interpret the Trumpets and Vials of the same events, or to regard the latter as merely an intensification of the woes of the former. On the contrary, their application to distinct and separate questions seems to be indicated as much by the unequal severity which distinguishes them, as by the diversity of objects against which they are directed.

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with

great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not : and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition : and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings : five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come ; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet ; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them : for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings : and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”—Rev. xvii.

This chapter may be said to be explanatory of preceding symbols, its object being to define that great city whose fall had been previously announced, and to point out that remarkable head among the seven Roman emperors who was to be the author of its destruction. Accordingly, one of the seven angels which had the Vials, shows to St. John a woman arrayed in purple and scarlet, sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast, and upon her forehead a name written, “*Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.*” Not to anticipate the proofs which will be adduced in the following chapter, it will be sufficient to say that the woman is Rome, who has corrupted the world with her idolatry, and who is “drunk with the blood of the saints and with that of the martyrs of Jesus.” The Beast that carrieth her is Nero, who shall ascend from the bottomless pit (the

abode of demons), shall continue for a short space (the three years and a half of the Antichristian tribulation), and at the expiration of that term shall go into perdition. The seven heads, as we have elsewhere shown, are both the seven mountains and the seven emperors of Rome, and the ten horns may represent ten provincial deputies, or ten Parthian allies, the Princes of the East, who, although not actually kings as yet, shall receive power as kings for a limited period with the Beast. These are partisans of Nero, and disposed to favour his return, who "*together with the beast* (MSS. Alex. and Sin.) shall hate the whore (Rome), and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." Equally with Nero, to whom they give their power, the ten horns¹ are persecutors of the Christian Church; and in Apocalyptic language, "make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings." Further allusion is made to their opposition and their defeat in chapter xix., where "the kings of the earth and their armies" enter into conflict with Messiah, and are miserably overthrown.

¹ In the Book of Daniel, the ten horns of the fourth (Macedonian) kingdom are explained in chapter xi. of ten kings of Syria and Egypt who precede Antiochus Epiphanes. This makes it probable that the author of the Apocalypse, following his Danielic precedent, intended by the ten horns to portray ten proconsular rulers of the great Roman empire, or ten Parthian allies. Comp. "Ten kings *which shall arise*" (Dan. vii. 24), with "ten kings *which have received no kingdom as yet*" (Rev. xvii. 12).

CHAPTER IX.

BABYLON.

“ And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power ; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works : in the cup which she has filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her : for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine ; and she shall be utterly burned with fire : for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning. Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city ! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her ; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more. The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls ! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought.

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And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city ! and they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness ! for in one hour is she made desolate. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets ; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee ; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee ; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee ; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee ; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee : for thy merchants were the great men of the earth ; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.”—Rev. xviii.

THE task before us is to find a city which fell, or was supposed to fall, in St. John’s day, and whose destruction cannot be deferred, except at the sacrifice of exegetical consistency, to a remote period. We are concerned, moreover, not with the overthrow of an ecclesiastical system, however palatable such a theory might be to Protestant invidiousness, but of a literal city ; for it surely cannot be predicated of a religion that it should be destroyed by “death, mourning, famine, and burning with fire ;” neither does it appear reasonable that a prophecy occupied with the triumphs of Messiah should be distorted to signify the downfall of an important branch of the Christian Church. It is also evident that the prophecy is concerned with the destruction of a city *then exercising universal empire over the kings and nations of the whole world*, and not with that of some great city which might hereafter exercise similar dominion ; for it is simply impossible to interpret the words “which reigneth,”¹ in any other sense than that of a city which was then holding dominion over the kings of the earth. This great city, it is

¹ ἡ ἔχουσα βασιλείαν.

well known, could only be Rome Pagan; and it is more logical to infer that the writer may have fallen into error when he drew the picture of its destruction, than to suppose that the symbols point to some other city, or to the same city at a future stage of its existence. We adduce the following proofs in support of our position:—

I. 1. Our first argument to show that Babylon must be Rome Pagan is taken from the definition given of the great city in the book itself. “The seven heads,” it is said, “are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth”—a definition which points beyond all reasonable doubt to that city described by every poet and historian of the day as built on seven hills.¹ This is so generally admitted, that it only needs to be said the history of Apocalyptic literature knows of no other interpretation, and that it was not until the fifth century when the Roman Church was in the ascendant, that it was made an open question whether Babylon meant Rome. The propriety of applying the mystical title of Babylon to Rome may also be inferred from the correspondence observable between the circumstances of the “Great Babylon”² of the ancient prophet, and those of the eternal city. As ancient Babylon “dwelt upon many waters,”³ and exercised unlimited authority over the heathen world, so the mystical Babylon is called, “The great whore that sitteth upon many waters,” explained of “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues,” *i.e.* *heathen nations*. To this it may be added that Babylon is defined as “The great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth,” *i.e.*, *heathen princes*: and these are subsequently represented as bringing the glory and the costliness of the nations (*the Gentiles*) into the New Jerusalem.⁴

¹ “Septem urbs alta jugis quæ toti præsidet orbi.”—Propertius, iii. 10.

“Dî quibus septem placuere colles.”—Hor. *Carmen Sec.*

“Imperium terris, animos æquabit Olympo,

Septemque una sibi muro circumdabit artes.”—Virg. *Æn.* vi. 782.

² Dan. iv. 30.

³ Jer. li. 13.

⁴ Rev. xxi. 24–26.

It is matter of common knowledge that the magnificent dominion of Rome was established in all parts of the habitable earth; the kings of the then known world receiving and ruling their kingdoms in subordination to the fiat of the seven-hilled city—the city itself, and not its domestic or foreign territorial dependencies, giving laws to the world.

2. The woman is not only arrayed “in purple and scarlet colour,” but sits upon a “scarlet-coloured beast;” purple and scarlet being enumerated in connection with other articles of regal furniture, as “fine linen, and gold, and precious stones, and pearls,” among the riches of the seven-hilled city. It is well known that to assume the purple was a phrase equivalent to the official investiture of the Roman emperors: thus Jesus was clothed in mocked dignity with a purple robe, and Vespasian and Titus, at their triumph, were arrayed in those “ancient purple habits which were proper to their family.”¹ The purple and scarlet, therefore, in which the woman and the beast are arrayed, may signify the imperial character of the city itself, as well as that of her rulers. That Rome, of the time of Nero, answered to this description, is plain from the fact that the emperor, not content with the improvements made by those who had preceded him, sought to imitate the grandeur of the great oriental city from which its mysterious name is derived; the boast of Augustus, “that he had found the city of brick and left it of marble,” being surpassed by the restoration effected by Nero in a style of truly Eastern and even Babylonian magnificence. The apparently conflicting statement which represents the woman sitting on the beast subsequently destroyed by the beast which carries her, finds, as we shall presently see, its unique solution in the popular expectation that Rome should be destroyed by one of its seven heads; the ascription of these Protean shapes to one and the same individual, who now sustains the eternal city in more than its wonted magnificence, and again accomplishes its miserable and complete overthrow, making the

¹ Jos. Bell. Jud. vii. 7.

Apocalypse not only the most extraordinary, but the most unintelligible book in the world.

3. The woman (the emblem in apocalyptic language generally referring to a city) is described as "The mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the merchants of the earth waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies;" terms evidently borrowed from Isaiah xxiii. 15-18, and descriptive not only of commercial enterprise, but of the contaminating effect produced upon those nations which came into contact with the harlot city. The nature of this wealth is noticed as peculiarly Asiatic: "gold, and silver, and precious stones, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine (citron) wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense," being included among its costly treasures—treasures which had been brought from Asia to Rome in ships, and which, according to the Sibylline prophecies, Rome should again restore to the East. The wealth, moreover, of great Babylon was such as could only be found in an ancient city; for it surely cannot be affirmed of Rome Papal, or of an European city of modern times, that it contained "chariots, and slaves, and souls of men"—perhaps human beings put up for sale. It gives confirmation to our position that, in the account given by Josephus of the triumph of Vespasian and Titus, many of the precious things here enumerated, plundered from the city of Jerusalem, were carried in procession through the streets of Rome.¹

4. The woman is further said to be "drunken with the blood of the saints and of the martyrs of Jesus, and in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." Applicable as this description might be to that city of which it was emphatically said, "it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem," it may

¹ *Bell. Jud.* vii. 5.

be used with still greater propriety of imperial Rome, then putting forth her savage edicts against the Christian faith, and literally "drunken" with the blood of Apostles and Prophets, by which last title not merely the seers of the Old Testament, but Christian teachers, were not unfrequently designated.¹ It ceases, therefore, to be a wonder that the triumphant song of those who had "gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name," should be heard over Babylon, saying, "Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God : for true and righteous are his judgments ; for he hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand."² Indeed, throughout the Apocalypse, Babylon is held in intense abomination, and every epithet expressive of horror and disgust is showered upon her with lavish profusion. Among the sublime contrasts with which the book abounds none is perhaps more striking than that instituted between the whore³ and the bride.⁴ What the beast⁵ is to the Lamb,⁶ and what the false prophet is to the two prophets of Messiah, Great Babylon is to the New Jerusalem.

We come, therefore, to the conclusion that the woman sitting upon the seven hills, elsewhere described as "the great whore, sitting upon many waters," exercising œcumenical sovereignty over the kings and nations of the earth, arrayed in purple and scarlet, holding commercial and polluting intercourse with the merchants of the earth, and who, in addition to other enormities, was drunken with the blood of the saints and of the martyrs of Jesus, represents that great city, existing in St. John's day, which alone can answer to the conditions of the Babylon of the Apocalypse. It is satisfactory to find that the Church has never seriously held any other interpretation, although, from the impossibility of find-

¹ Eph. iv. 11 ; 1 Cor. xii. 28 ; Acts xiii. 1 ; xv. 32 ; Rom. xii. 6.

² Rev. xviii. 20 ; xix. 1, 2.

³ πόρνη.

⁴ νύμφη.

⁵ θηρίον.

⁶ ἀρνίον.

ing a fulfilment in the circumstances of the required period it has been led to transfer the application of the prophecy from Rome Pagan to Rome Papal. The arbitrariness of this last theory is too palpable to need refutation. Proceeding upon the assumption that the communications made in this book are infallible, it resolves to coerce by violence the symbols that will not admit of gentle pressure, and determines to find a fulfilment even where it is patent that a fulfilment may not be had. An ignorant piety has therefore pronounced in favour of an interpretation which adapts the visions of the Revelation to the circumstances of the Roman Catholic Church, which discovers Antichrist in the harmless old man who presides over its councils, and explains the burning of Babylon of the vengeance which is expected to descend on the Italian metropolis. We desire to expose this uncharitable and ill-founded accusation by all the means in our power, and shall not think our time or our labour wasted if we can lessen this senseless clamour against a cognate Church. This we hope, to some extent, to have already accomplished. If it shall have been proved that the great Babylon of the Apocalypse is not a Christian but a *heathen* city, then, not until Rome Papal shall have experienced a relapse from Christianity to heathenism can the symbol be interpreted with fairness of the seat of Papal power, which is the source of so much anxiety in the present day. It is needless, therefore, to observe that the time when alone it was possible for the Apocalyptic denunciations against Babylon to receive an accomplishment has gone by never to be recalled ; and that it is only by a forced and unnatural construction that they can be twisted to apply to an ecclesiastical system in whose fortunes the sympathies of the Church of that period were not enlisted. Should it be objected that the overthrow of ancient Babylon may be typical of that of modern Rome, it may be fairly replied that the fall of a heathen city can no more be said to prefigure that of a Christian Church than the destruction of Jerusalem can be said to be typical of the Last

Judgment ; a correspondence "not only in general outline but in minute particulars between the events compared being a necessary condition in every analogy instituted between type and antitype." It should, perhaps, be mentioned that this last theory owes its existence to the supposition that "a cyclic development of history lies at the basis of all prophecy, which not only implies that history always repeats itself in the same form, but makes it uncertain to which form the prediction originally referred."

II. But whilst, perhaps, it will be admitted that Babylon is Rome Pagan, a *crux interpretum* remains to be solved. It will scarcely be denied that the Apocalypse describes the complete and sudden overthrow of this great city ; its speedy and irremediable desolation being announced in language whose positiveness does not admit of question. The work of destruction is assigned in the prophecy to the ten horns of the beast—the allies of the Neronic Antichrist. These are said to "have one mind, and to give their power and strength unto the beast," who, *together with the beast* (Sinaitic and Alexandrine MSS.), shall hate the whore and shall make her desolate and naked, and "shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire."¹ And then arises the fierce rejoicing over the persecuting and bloody city : "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. . . . Therefore shall her plagues come *in one day*, death and mourning, and famine ; and she shall be utterly burned with fire : for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. . . . Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city ! for in one hour is thy judgment come."² To complete the picture, "A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast *it* into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all."

It would be difficult to express in more definite terms the

¹ Rev. xvii. 12-17.

² Cf. Isa. xiii. 19-22.

destruction of the great city which was then reigning over the kingdoms of the habitable world, or the means by which it was to be accomplished. This expectation, we know, was never realized. Rome did not fall in the way described in the Revelation ; the writer merely delineating a catastrophe which he supposed would happen, and which continued to be a subject of confident expectation for many centuries. And here it may be interesting to inquire whether anticipations respecting the fall of Babylon, corresponding with those expressed in the Revelation, may be discovered in apocalyptic books of a nearly contemporaneous period ; for, if this could be established, it would relieve St. John of the charge of singularity, by showing that the vaticinations of the Apocalypse have been repeated by succeeding writers.

I. The supposed destruction of Babylon, or Rome, by the returning Nero would appear to be abundantly indicated by writings of a kindred and almost contemporaneous character, and especially by that extraordinary composition entitled the Sibylline Oracles, of which the second and eighth book contain a sort of paraphrase on the Apocalypse. A storm of disastrous war proceeding from Italy falls upon the holy city and temple, in consequence of which a great king, like a star, who has committed a horrible murder upon his own mother (the stigma with which Nero is ever branded in these oracles), passes over the Euphrates at the head of many myriads of Eastern allies,¹ and many stain with their blood the sacred soil of Rome.² Babylon (Rome) and the land of Italy are to be destroyed by the matricide Nero with the aid of the Median and Persian kings : this retribution overtaking the imperial city in consequence of the desolation brought upon the heaven-built temple and the holy people.³ A heaven-sent destruction elsewhere falls on haughty Rome ; she is to be bowed down to the earth never to lift up herself again, and the glory of her eagle-bearing legions is to fail.⁴ Continuing

¹ Cf. Rev. ix. 16.

² *Orac. Sibyll.* iv. 115-139.

³ *Ibid.* v. 143-161.

⁴ *Ibid.* viii. 68-78.

her sorrowful burden upon Rome, the prophetess, in terms similar to those employed in the Apocalypse, declares that she shall be desolate for ever, because she practised sorcery : that, in return for her boasting, she should sit as a widow by the banks of Tiber answering to her moan : that retribution should be executed upon her for her wickedness, and that she should be cast into the lake of fire.¹ Indeed, to quote all the passages which bear upon this subject would be to transcribe no inconsiderable portion of the Sibylline books. Enough, perhaps, has been said to show that the approaching fall of Rome was the belief of a very early period, and to account for the expression of that belief in the Apocalypse.

2. The fall of Babylon, or Rome, is followed in the prophecy by the Advent of Messiah, and the connection between these two events is reproduced with marked reference to the visions of the Apocalypse in the leaves of the Sibyls. In the second book, the burning of Rome is followed by the Coming of Christ and the Millennial reign.² In the fifth, after bewailing the doom which the matricidal fugitive (Nero) will bring upon Rome, the announcement is made of the coming of a heavenly ruler who should make the city beloved of God more splendid than the sun, moon, and stars.³ In the eighth, after repeating that Rome shall be Rume (a street), the Sibyl depicts the Advent of a pure and holy king who shall reign for ever.⁴ Indeed, throughout these wild and rhapsodical poems the Advent of Christ follows the destruction of Rome as naturally as the kingdom of the saints succeeds the overthrow of the heathen kingdoms of Daniel. In whatever estimation these may now be held, there was a time in the history of the Church when their authority was considered equal to that of Holy Scripture itself,—the recollection of the reverence with which the Sibylline books were regarded being preserved in the well known hymn,—

¹ *Orac. Sibyll.* v. 168-178.

² *Ibid.* v. 414-427.

³ *Ibid.* ii. 15-51.

⁴ *Ibid.* viii. 167-173.

“ Dies iræ, dies illa,
Solvat sæclum in favillâ,
Teste David cum Sibyllâ.”

With the truth or falsehood of this theory of the latter days, the interpreter of the Apocalypse is not primarily concerned ; his office being rather to exhibit the intention than to vindicate the historical accuracy of the writer. His duty is accomplished when he has shown that in the mind of the seer of Patmos the Advent of Messiah is indissolubly bound up with the destruction of Rome, and that the same connection is observable in subsequent imitations of the Apocalyptic original. At the same time, it appears to him a difficulty fatal to the prophetic character of the Revelation, and from which apparently there is no escape, that the author should have placed these events in order of prophetic sequence, and that an essential point of Christian belief should be chronologically associated with the fall of a heathen city.

3. In the apocryphal book of Pseudo-Esdras II., a work framed after the model of the Johannic Revelation, and written most probably about thirty years after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Advent of Messiah is said to follow the punishment of the Roman oppressors of the holy people. The prophet is supposed to be in Babylon (Rome) in the thirtieth year after the ruin of the city (Jerusalem), and grieved because he saw “the desolation of Sion, and the wealth of them that dwell in Babylon.”¹ He is anxious to know if they that inhabit Babylon are better than they of Sion, and why Israel is given up as a reproach to ungodly nations.² To this mournful complaint the answer is given, that the climax of the iniquity of the heathen had not yet come, but that the days were at hand when “God would begin to draw nigh and to visit them that dwell upon the earth, and begin to make inquisition of them what they be that have hurt unjustly with their unrighteousness, and when the affliction of Sion shall be fulfilled, and when the world

¹ 2 Esdras iii. 1, 2.

² Ibid. iii. 31 ; vi. 57-59.

that shall begin to vanish away shall be finished." Signs are then given of the approaching consummation similar to those of the Apocalypse, and it is added, "Whosoever remaineth from all these that I have told thee shall escape, and see my salvation and the end of your world:" thus, equally with the author of the Apocalypse, making the destruction of the Roman power contemporaneous with the Coming of Christ and the end of the age.

In the subsequent vision of the eagle (the Roman kingdom) that came up from the sea, which had twelve feathered wings and three heads,¹ "the last things (and among them the destruction of the eagle by fire) which the Most High will do unto them that dwell upon earth in the last days" are described under emblems of great Apocalyptic beauty and significance. An eagle, spreading her wings over all the earth, unto whom all things under heaven were subject, and against whom no man spake, is seen coming up from the sea having "twelve feathered wings," "eight contrary feathers," and "three heads." The "twelve feathered wings" may refer to the six great emperors of the Julian family: Julius, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero; each emperor, according to M. Völkmar, being described as furnished with two wings.² The "eight contrary feathers" are Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Nerva. The "three heads" being Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian. Of the "twelve feathered wings" it is simply said that the first (Julius) "reigned over all the earth," *i.e.*, became absolute master of the Roman Empire; that the second (Augustus) "had more time than any of the twelve," having reigned fifty-six years; then arose the third (Tiberius) . . . So went it with all the residue, one after another, as that every one reigned and then appeared no more." Of the "eight contrary feathers," *i.e.*, the four usurping emperors whose "times are small and their years swift," "one (Galba) is set up, but shortly it appeared no

¹ 2 Esdras xi., xii.

² Cf. "The two wings of the great eagle," Rev. xii. 14.

more," having reigned seven months and seven days; the second (Otho), whose reign lasted only three months and two days, is "sooner away than the first;" the third (Vitellius), "who thought to reign," is destroyed by Vespasian; the fourth (Nerva) is "kept to the end"—"this is the small kingdom, and full of trouble, as thou sawest," the two feathers being here explained of one small kingdom, a circumstance which confirms the correctness¹ of the interpretation which assigns two wings to each emperor. Of the "three heads," the great head in the midst (Vespasian), so called from his pre-eminence over the other two heads Titus and Domitian, who "put the whole earth in fear and bare rule in it over all those that dwelt upon the earth with much oppression," after a reign of ten years "dies upon his bed, and yet with pain"—an illness mentioned by Suetonius and Dio Cassius, Vespasian himself, in the crisis of his disorder, demanding to be raised upright, saying, that an emperor ought to die standing. Of the two remaining heads, "the sword of the one (Domitian) devours the other (Titus), and at the last he (Domitian, slain by Stephanus) falls, through the sword, himself;" Titus having died suddenly, not without suspicion of treachery from his brother. Domitian is succeeded by Nerva, the two little feathers "divided from the six," whom the Highest has kept unto the end. It is during the short and turbulent reign of this last-named emperor that the Roman kingdom is to be destroyed, and that the command is issued, "Appear no more thou eagle, nor thy horrible wings, nor thy wicked feathers, nor thy malicious heads, nor thy hurtful claws, nor all thy vain body." This, in the opinion of the writer, is the time for the Advent of Messiah, and "the Lion"² rising up out of the wood, and roaring, and speaking to the eagle, rebukes her for her unrighteousness. This, adds the prophet, is "the anointed (or breath) which the Highest hath kept for them and for

¹ This is confirmed xi. 27, where the second (Otho) is rendered in the Latin version by the plural *secundæ*.

² Cf. Rev. v. 5.

their wickedness unto the end ; he shall reprove them and upbraid them for their cruelty ; for he shall set them before him alive in judgment, and shall rebuke them and correct them.”¹

After the extermination of the eagle (the Roman Empire), the coming of the Son of Man to destroy the enemies of the Church and to establish the Messianic kingdom is delineated in terms which correspond with almost servile fidelity with those employed in the Apocalypse. “I beheld,” says Pseudo-Esdras, “and lo, that man waxed strong with the thousands of heaven, and when he turned his countenance to look, all the things trembled that were seen under him.” An innumerable multitude are gathered against him to subdue him ; “And lo, as he saw the violence of the multitude that came, he neither lifted up his hand, nor held sword, nor any instrument of war ; but only I saw that he sent out of his mouth as it had been a blast of fire, and out of his lips a flaming breath, and out of his tongue he cast out sparks and tempests, and fell with violence upon the multitude which was prepared to fight, and burned them up every one.”² The interpretation of this remarkable vision, given in the next chapter, is merely a paraphrase of the Apocalyptic original. The nations who have assisted at the desolation of Babylon “leave the battle which they have one against another,” and are gathered together against Messiah. “But he shall stand upon the top of Mount Sion,³ and Sion shall come and shall be showed unto all men prepared and builded,⁴ and this, my Son, shall rebuke the wicked inventions of these nations, and he shall destroy them, without labour, by the law which is like unto fire.”⁵ It only remains to be noticed that the vision is said to be of immediate accomplishment, “for the world has lost its youth, and the times begin to wax old.”⁶

4. It may be added to the proof already adduced from the

¹ 2 Esdras xii. 31-33.

² Cf. Rev. xiv. 1.

³ 2 Esdras xiii. 21-38.

⁴ Cf. Rev. xix. 20 ; 2 Thess. ii. 8.

⁵ Cf. Rev. xxi. 2.

⁶ 2 Esdras xiv. 10-18.

Sibylline books and from Pseudo-Esdras, that the ancient Fathers connected the destruction of Rome with the coming of Christ and the end of the world. Tertullian enjoins upon the Christians to pray for the welfare of the eternal city and the whole Roman empire "so long as the age stands, for so long will the empire stand."¹ And again: "We have even greater need to pray for the emperors, and for every condition of the empire, and for the affairs of Rome, knowing that by the safeguard of the Roman empire there is kept back that time of extreme violence which hangs over all the world, even the very end of the age which threatens horrible calamities."² Lactantius observes: "That desolation and confusion will be thus caused. The Roman name by which the world is now governed (I tremble to say it, but speak it I must, for it will take place), the Roman name will be taken from the earth, and empire will revert to Asia. Once more the East shall rule, and the West obey."³ "It is evident (he says again) from the state of affairs that the end of all things would not be distant, save only that while Rome is safe there seems no room to fear. But when that head of the world shall fall and begin, *as the Sibyls say*, to be a ruin, who does not see that the end of human affairs, yea of the world itself, will have arrived?"⁴ Ephrem-Syrus considered the precursory signs of the Second Advent fulfilled in his day, with the exception of the fall of the Roman empire; "for, when the Roman empire ends, all things must be fulfilled."⁵ Chrysostom remarks in his commentary on 2 Thess. ii.: "What then is that which withholds, that is, which hinders the revelation of Antichrist? Some say the grace of the Spirit: others, the empire of the Romans: with these last I fully agree."⁶ Jerome, who says that he had "dwelt in Babylon, and was an inhabitant of the purple-bearing harlot, and lived after the manner of the Quirites," invites Rome to

¹ *Ad Scap.* cap. ii.

³ *Institut.* lib. vii.

⁵ *Sermo de Vitâ Religiosâ.*

² *Apol.* cap. xxx. II.

⁴ Cap. xxv.

⁶ *Homily IV.*

fresh repentance, in the hope that she may yet escape from the doom still hanging over her : " The curse with which the Saviour hath threatened thee in the Apocalypse, thou mayest escape by repentance ; thou hast the example of the Ninevites."

From the evidence afforded by these cognate writings, it may not be unreasonable to conclude that Rome Pagan is the city whose fall is so graphically described in the Revelation. It is not only that popular rumour associated the return of Nero with the discomfiture of his enemies, and reported that by the assistance of the Parthians he would regain his former empire : nor yet that, according to the Sibyl, the imperial city is to be destroyed by the matricide Nero, with the help of Median and Persian kings from beyond the Euphrates, an event to be followed by the coming of a Messianic prince who shall reign for ever : nor yet, again, that Divine wrath is denounced by the prophetess upon Rome and the soil of Italy in retaliation for woes inflicted by Roman invaders upon the Jewish city and temple : neither is it that in the magnificent Apocalypse of Esdras II., a book of the highest value, and which deserves the careful consideration of students of prophecy, Rome is styled by the familiar name of Babylon,¹ and that the period of the extermination of the eagle (the Roman empire) is fixed with historical minuteness and chronological precision : nor yet, again, that the catastrophe upon the Roman kingdom is to be immediately succeeded by the end of all things, and the coming of the Son of Man to judgment ;—but it is all of these combined, which not only establishes a complete harmony between these Apocryphal books and the superb original of which they are the copy, but confines their respective vaticinations to the same events. If the predictions, whether of the seer of Patmos himself, or of his prophetic imitators, have not been verified by the result, the failure may be classed with that of

¹ " Sic et Babylon apud Joannem nostrum, Romanæ urbis figura est."—*Tertullian*.

similar eschatological theories. Heathen Rome, it is true, gave place to Rome Christian, and the supreme power migrated from the Tiber to the Bosphorus ; but no desolation corresponding to that described in the Apocalypse attended the political change. Rome Papal, again, like Rome Pagan, has never fallen ; and if she waits for the fulfilment of the denunciations of modern hierophants, may never fall : the introduction of the subject of the Papacy into the Revelation at all being an anachronism of the most absurd as well as the most violent kind. A supreme regard for truth will, it is hoped, lead to the acceptance of the interpretation put upon Babylon by the Sibyls and the pious author of the Second Book of Esdras—an interpretation supported by the universal consent of the early Christian Fathers—and to the belief that the writer intended to depict the overthrow of the great heathen city which had deserved such retribution by many a deed of blood ; that he described events as he supposed, and, possibly, with a feeling natural to one who had experienced the acuteness of religious persecution, desired they should happen ; that he drew the original picture which has been imitated in Apocryphal books of a subsequent period, the expectations which his prophecies aroused indicating the shape which he intended they should assume.

The crucial point in this Apocalyptic theory, which is considered to be most fatal to traditional views, is that the Advent of Messiah is connected in order of prophetic sequence with the destruction of Pagan Rome—a fact asserted with clearness in the book itself, as well as abundantly recognized in subsequent imitations of the original. This circumstance stamps the Revelation with the charge of historical inaccuracy, and presents a dilemma from which it is impossible to escape. With whatever difficulties the coming of Christ is encompassed in other writings of the New Testament, these are increased in the Revelation a thousandfold ; the catastrophe being associated in the latter with an event which the course of history has rendered anachronous, and therefore hopeless.

"It would not be easy," says an able writer on the subject, "to find language which should convey, as briefly, simply, and naturally as that of the Apocalypse, the author's expectation of the almost immediate arrival of the crucified Jesus to be the conqueror of the pagan empire of Rome, and the founder of the millennial kingdom. St. John, in common, we suppose, with all the apostles, confidently anticipated the approaching Advent of the Messiah. The non-fulfilment of the prediction shows the futility of the hope, and demonstrates the fallibility of the prophet."

CHAPTER X.

THE MILLENNIUM.

“And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia ; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God : for true and righteous are his judgments : for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen ; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thundrings, saying, Alleluia : for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him : for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white ; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not : I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren, that have the testimony of Jesus : worship God : for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse ; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns ; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood : and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven, followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations : and he shall rule them with a rod of iron : and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun ; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God ; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both

small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth : and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”—Rev. xix.

WITH the fall of the great city Babylon, which is destroyed by the Neronic Antichrist, the voices of an innumerable multitude are heard in heaven, saying, “Alleluia ; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God ; for true and righteous are his judgments ; for he hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.” This triumphant song of victory, in which the Alleluias of the conquerors are blended with the smoke of the doomed city which rises up for ever and ever, is taken up by the four beasts and the four and twenty elders who worshipped before the throne ; and the saints are bid to be glad and rejoice, for “The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.”

It would seem probable, now that Great Babylon is destroyed, that the Messianic reign would immediately commence ; but before that event can take place, other enemies remain to be overcome. The adversaries of Messiah, in other words, the Beast and his armies, continue their persecutions against the saints, and make war upon Messiah himself. Behold, then, Jesus and Nero, Christ and Antichrist. “The Prince of the kings of the earth,” and the False Prophet who gathers together the kings of the whole world, face to face in mortal combat, and confronting each other as heaven is opposed to hell. The conflict which follows is conceived in a highly Judaic spirit, and describes the overthrow of the Beast and his armies under the figure of a war and triumph of the Messiah. St. John sees “heaven

opened, and behold, a white horse (vi. 2), and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war ;” in other words, he sees the conquering Messiah armed with his two-edged sword, and his iron sceptre, treading the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. On his vesture and on his thigh is his title inscribed, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS,” and he is accompanied by the armies of heaven upon white horses, and clothed in fine linen, white and clean. The scene which follows, is a pictorial description of the great Messianic battle-field, in which “the kings of the earth and their armies are gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse and his army,” and the carnage is so terrible, that the fowls of heaven are invited to feast on the slain. The issue of this contest is not left in doubt. The Beast is taken, and the False Prophet that wrought miracles before him, and the two are cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone ;¹ the remnant being slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”² This victory lays the foundation of the Messianic reign. Christ now establishes his kingdom upon earth, and He, and such of his saints as “have not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither have received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands,” reign in the midst of the conquered nations for a thousand years.³ Such

¹ “The unclean spirits (will be judged first) with the *Opposer* : I will command them to depart into outer darkness : there are whelmings. And I said, O Lord, of what sort is the place ? And I heard a voice saying unto me, Hear, O righteous John. Should a man of thirty years of age cast a stone into the abyss : let it roll for twenty years it would not reach to the bottom of hell.”—*Apocryphal Apocalypse of John* xx.

² Rev. xix. 11–21.

³ This strange theory of a millennial kingdom is reproduced with a most important difference sensibly affecting the Divinity of Jesus, in Pseudo-Esdras vii. 28–33. “My son Jesus (*Filius, Messias meus*, Arabic) shall be revealed with those that be with him, and they that remain shall rejoice within (*i.e. for the space of*) four hundred years. After these years shall my son Christ *die*, and all men that have life. And the world shall be

are the appalling scenes which introduce the Millennium, an event which we are unable to regard as having received, or as ever likely to receive an accomplishment, and which, like other visionary anticipations of the book, must be classed among those—

“Immortal dreams which could beguile
The seer of Patmos’ rocky isle.”

THE MILLENNIUM.

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”—Rev. xx. 1–10.

The result of the great Messianic conflict was the destruction turned into the old silence for seven days. And after the seven days the world that yet awaketh not shall awake, and the old world shall die. And the earth shall restore those that are asleep in her, and so shall the dust those that dwell in silence, and the secret places shall deliver those souls that were committed unto them. And the Most High shall appear on the seat of judgment, and misery shall pass away, and the long-suffering shall have an end.”

of the Beast and the False Prophet, who were cast into the lake of fire. Another, and a more formidable enemy, remains to be overcome, who is not destroyed at once like the former, but who is cast into the abyss, and bound¹ for a thousand years. During this period Messiah and his saints exercise undisturbed dominion over the Gentile world, evil is abolished in the earth, and Satan can no longer deceive the nations; but at the expiration of that term he is loosed from his prison to renew his former machinations against the Church; and the result is that the outlying heathen nations, "the number of whom is as the sand of the sea," revolt against the priests of God and of Christ, and besiege the camp of the saints and the beloved city (Jerusalem). The whole passage is a transparent accommodation of a prophetic anticipation of a former period to the times of the Messiah.² As, according to Ezekiel, after the return of the Jews to their own land from the captivity in Babylon, "Gog and all his multitude ascend and come up like a cloud to cover the land," so the heathen nations which are in the four quarters of the earth symbolized by Gog and Magog, encamp against the saints. As, according to the ancient prophet,³ "great hailstones, fire, and brimstone" descend upon Gog and the many people that are with him; so, according to St. John, fire comes down from heaven and devours the invaders.

That the writer of the Apocalypse meant to assert a literal reign of Christ and his saints upon earth for a thousand years, receives confirmation from the fact that the Church of the three first centuries was essentially chiliastic. Papias says of the productiveness of the earth in the Millennial period, "A grain of wheat will produce 10,000 heads, and each head will have 10,000 grains, and each grain will yield ten pounds of clear fine flour, and other fruits will yield seeds and

¹ Tobit viii. 3.

² "In fine extremitatis dierum Gog et Magog et exercitus eorum adscendent Hierosolyma, et per manus regis Messiae ipsi cadent, et vii annos dierum ardebunt filii Israel ex armis eorum."—*Jerus. Targum on Numb.* xi. 27.

³ Ezek. xxxviii., xxxix.

herbage in the same proportion." "Observe, my children" (says St. Barnabas), "why it says, He ended in six days: this means that the Lord God will finish all things in six thousand years. . . . And He rested on the seventh day: this means, when his Son shall come, and shall abolish the time of the wicked one,¹ and shall judge the ungodly, and shall change the sun and moon and stars: then shall He rest gloriously on the seventh day."² "One of our own people" (says Justin Martyr), "named John, an apostle of Christ, prophesied in the Apocalypse that for those who believe in our Christ there will be a thousand years in Jerusalem; and afterwards there will come the Catholic, or universal and simultaneous resurrection of all men."³ Irenæus alludes to "the times of the kingdom; that is, the rest, even the seventh day made holy." Speaking of the wonders of the Messianic reign, he asserts on the authority of Christ, "The days will come in which vines will grow, each having 10,000 branches, and on each branch there will be 10,000 twigs, and on each twig 10,000 clusters of grapes, and each grape when pressed will yield twenty-five measures of wine; and when any one of the saints shall take hold of a cluster of grapes, another cluster will cry out, 'I am a better cluster; take me, and on my account give thanks unto the Lord.'" Tertullian supports the literal Millennium: "We confess that a kingdom is promised us upon earth, but before heaven, and in another state, even for a thousand years after the resurrection; in the city of divine workmanship, the Jerusalem brought down from heaven."⁴ Hippolytus also adds his testimony to the same effect: "The sabbath is a type and image of the future kingdom of the saints, when they shall reign with Christ after his coming down from heaven, as John declares in the Apocalypse." To these may be added Nepos, Cyprian, Victorinus, and Lactantius, the last of whom observes: "At this period brutes shall not live by blood, nor birds by prey, but all things

¹ *ἄνομος*.

² *Dial. cum Tryph.*

³ Barnab. xv.

⁴ *Adv. Marc.* iii. 23.

shall be peaceful and tranquil : lions and calves will stand together on the stall, the wolf will not seize the sheep, the dog will not hunt, hawks and eagles will do no hurt, the infant shall play with serpents . . . Men will lead a life of perfect tranquillity and abundance . . . those who are then living in the body will not die ; but will, during the same thousand years, bring forth a countless multitude, and their offspring shall be holy and beloved of God.”¹ In this Millennial kingdom, according to the Chiliasts who adduced the latter chapters of Ezekiel in support of their position, marriages were to be held, and festivals kept, the temple was to be restored, and offerings resumed,—in short a sensuous kingdom of risen saints was to be established upon earth. This was the undoubted opinion of those who lived early enough to remember apostolic teaching on the subject. During the third and fourth centuries, however, a reaction set in against Millennial theories ; the original idea of a reign of Christ for a thousand years became modified, and was finally rejected altogether. Whether the narrow and Judaic views expressed in the Revelation were found to be unsuited to the more liberal tendencies of the age, or whether chiliastic theories seemed likely to run into excess, it is an historical fact that the orthodoxy of one period was the heterodoxy of another, and the Apocalypse fell into disrepute.

The first and most able opponent of Millennial theories was Dionysius of Alexandria, who, in his controversy with Nepos, an Egyptian bishop, in the third century, ascribed the book to John Presbyter, and not to John the Apostle. Eusebius rejected both the Apocalypse and the Millennium. The opinion of Jerome, although deterred by the difficulty of the subject he wrote no commentary on the Apocalypse, was opposed to that of the primitive Church. “The Jews” (he says) “believe that Jerusalem will be restored to them golden and jewelled, and that there will be once more victims and sacrifices, the marriage of the saints, and the kingdom of the

¹ Lact. vii. 24.

Lord and Saviour upon earth. All which, though I do not support, yet I am not able to condemn, since many churchmen and martyrs have said the same. Therefore, let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind, and let all things be reserved for the decision of the Lord.”¹ Augustine, who appears to have once been a Millenarian, thought fit to alter his opinion. We find him saying, “A thousand years. They who, from these words, infer that the first resurrection will be corporeal, are, among other things, chiefly influenced by the number of the thousand years, as if it were necessary that there should be in holy things a Sabbatism of that length. . . . Now, this opinion would be, in a certain degree, tolerable, if they would allow in that Sabbath some spiritual delights procured to the saints by the presence of the Lord. For I myself was once of the same opinion. But when they describe those who have risen as doing nothing but pass their time in most immoderate carnal banquets, in which the quantity of food and drink will exceed not only all decency but even all power of belief, they will find none but carnal persons to believe them.”² Supported by this formidable array of patristic writers who founded their objections against the Millenarian theories of the Apocalypse upon a sound and reasonable criticism, we have the less reluctance in taking up afresh the hesitation expressed by the Fathers, and in affirming the doctrine of a Millennium to be as unworthy of the attention of the Church of the nineteenth as it was of that of the third century.

Although Paul does not speak of a Millennium, he has some features which correspond with the chiliastic vision. With him, the first resurrection is that of the saints alone: death, the last enemy as in the Apocalypse, is destroyed, and the kingdom is one which flesh and blood cannot inherit. Jesus too, overcomes all opposition, and reigns till He has put all enemies under his feet, and only then delivers up the kingdom unto the Father, that God may be all in all.

¹ Jerome: “On Jeremiah,” ch. xx.

² *De Civ. Dei*, xx. 7.

THE JUDGMENT.

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away ; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them : and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”—Rev. xx. 11–15.

The Millennial reign, an idea unknown to other writers of the New Testament, is followed by the Universal Judgment. The seer of Patmos now beholds the great white throne of Almighty God and Him that sat upon it from whose august presence “the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was no place found for them.” He further sees “the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which was in it ; and death and Hades delivered up the dead that were in them ; and death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, *the lake of fire*”—the last clause being omitted in the Authorised Version. This description is taken with some unimportant variations from the judgment delineated in the Book of Daniel. As the elder prophet beholds the thrones placed and the Ancient of Days sitting,¹ so does the seer of Patmos behold “a great white throne, and Him that sat upon it.” As according to the former, “many that sleep in the dust of the earth awake,”² so, according to the latter, “the dead, small and great, stand before God.” As “the judgment is set, and the books opened,”³ so, “the books were opened, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works.” As every

¹ Dan. vii. 9.² Dan. xii. 2.³ Dan. vii. 10.

one shall be delivered who is found written in the book,¹ so "whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." It is remarkable that the judicial office is here executed, not by Christ, as in the Gospels, but by God Himself; the Un-named One who sits upon the throne being always in this book the Almighty God, before whom the dead, small and great, stand in judgment—a view also entertained by Pseudo-Esdras, who declares that judgment is executed by the Most High, by whom the times are ended, *and by no other*.² A somewhat similar scene is delineated in the Book of Enoch. Not to refer to the great Messianic section³ in which terms are employed evidently borrowed from the Apocalypse, such as the mention of the "sealed books," "the book of the living," "death and hell," "the throne of glory," "the earth delivering up from her womb, and hell delivering up from hers that which it has received, and destruction restoring that which it owes . . . and it shall be, that those who have been destroyed in the desert, and who have been devoured by the fish of the sea, and by wild beasts, shall return and trust in the day of the Elect One, for none shall perish in the presence of the Lord of spirits"⁴; we may observe that the vision of the seventy shepherds, which doubtless forms a part of the original book, and which may have been written about the beginning of the first century before Christ, supplies the data from which the Apocalyptic judgment may have been, to some extent, derived. In this remarkable vision, which bears a close affinity to that of the Apocalypse, the Jewish people, who have been ill-treated successively by seventy shepherds, are rescued at last by a lamb with a large horn, supposed to be John Hyrcanus. After a sword has been given to the sheep to wage a victorious warfare with the heathen round about,⁵ the Lord of the sheep sits upon the throne of judgment, causes the books to be opened,⁶ and

¹ Dan. xii. 1.² 2 Esdras vii. 33.³ Cc. 37-71.⁴ 1. liii. lx.⁵ Cf. Rev. xx. 8.⁶ Cf. Rev. xx. 11, 12.

casts his enemies into subterranean fire.¹ The new temple then descends from heaven,² the sheep who are white and pure enter it,³ whilst the heathen who have not perished obey them, and also enter it.⁴ It is, therefore, probable that the writer of the Apocalypse also drew largely on the Book of Enoch for his pictorial representation of the judgment, as he borrowed his description of the invasion of Gog and Magog, and of the New Jerusalem, from Ezekiel. Whilst, however, we willingly accord to the seer of Patmos facility of accommodative power, as well as genius, if not of a strictly original yet certainly of the most spiritual and exalted kind, we are disposed to attach no greater reliability to the vision of the Last Judgment presented in the Apocalypse than to the unique phenomenon of the Millennium which precedes it. Rather we prefer to regard it as a phase of that solemn expectation of approaching doom which finds such frequent utterance in the Gospels, tinged it may be, by colouring from the Books of Enoch and Daniel.

And in giving expression to our want of sympathy with Millennial theories, and with the events by which they are said to be accompanied, it is a consolation to remember that similar misgivings have been entertained in former ages, and that the Revelation has not descended to our times as a book "of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church." Not to speak of the exceptions raised by Dionysius of Alexandria and Eusebius, in the third and fourth centuries, nor of the fact that the Apocalypse was formally rejected by the Council of Laodicea, A.D. 360, nor yet again of the circumstance that the doctrine of the Millennium was condemned by the Augsburg Confession in the sixteenth century, not merely as a speculative, but as a dangerous practical error, we may adduce the learned testimony of the Reformers to a like distrust. Erasmus questioned the apostolicity of the Apocalypse, thinking it strange that one writing revelations should

¹ Cf. Rev. xx. 15.

² Cf. Rev. xxi. 2.

³ Cf. Rev. xxi. 27.

⁴ Cf. Rev. xxi. 24, 26.

repeat his name so carefully—"I, John," "I, John." Luther went further and observed, "To me this book lacks not a single proof of its being neither apostolic nor prophetic. Moreover, it seems too much for him to commend his own book—a thing done by no other sacred writer, even when it would seem more fitting, and to threaten that, if any man shall take away from the words of it, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life; and, moreover, to declare that they shall be blessed who hold to what it contains, although no one is able to understand what that is, much less to keep it, which is equivalent to not having it." Availing ourselves of our Protestant privilege, we too have been led to reject the extravagant theories, of which the Revelation is the exponent, and to consider them, not as predictions of actual events, but as the offshoots of a pious yet wayward imagination, the creations of a loving and trustful, yet fevered and heated brain. Our conclusion is strengthened by the fact, that after nearly two thousand years spent in the fruitless attempt to square its recusant symbols with events past, present, or to come, no result has been obtained which commends itself to the intelligence of reasonable men. Under these circumstances, scepticism is not impiety but wisdom, and honest doubt preferable to unthinking credulity. In spite of the grandeur of its prophetic utterances and the sublimity of its poetical conceptions, experience has abundantly shown that the Revelation has uniformly had an unhealthy and fanatical tendency, whilst its exegetical history exhibits a sad memorial of the follies of interpreters and the uncharitableness of rival theologians. A book which deals in theological invective of a bitter kind, which displays Jewish predilection in an exclusive and unamiable light, which represents Jesus as a tyrannical and sanguinary Messiah,¹ and the Almighty Himself as a vindictive and avenging Deity,² which abounds in monstrous prodigies and revels in incredible phenomena,

¹ Rev. xiv. 14-20; xix. 11-21.

² Rev. xiv. 10, 11; xix. 2.

which founds the Millennial kingdom upon the defeat of the armies of Antichrist, and which connects the coming of Christ at the end of the world with the calamity which came upon Jerusalem and the destruction of Pagan Rome—whatever its claim to apostolic authorship or canonical position—can neither be valuable as a prediction, nor be regarded as a safe guide for the performance of the duties of this life nor for the attainment of that which is to come.

CHAPTER XI.

THE NEW JERUSALEM.

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth : for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away ; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write : for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things ; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone : which is the second death. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God : and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal ; and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel : on the east three gates ; on the north three gates ; on the south three gates ; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth : and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper :

and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper ; the second, sapphire ; the third, a chalcidony ; the fourth, an emerald ; the fifth, sardonyx ; the sixth, sardius ; the seventh, chrysolyte ; the eighth, beryl ; the ninth, a topaz ; the tenth, a chrysoprasus ; the eleventh, a jacinth ; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls ; every several gate was of one pearl : and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein : for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it : for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it : and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day : for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie : but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month : and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse : but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it ; and his servants shall serve him ; and they shall see his face ; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there ; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God giveth them light : and they shall reign for ever and ever."—Rev. xxi., xxii. 1-5.

WITH the beginning of chapter xxi. a vision is seen of surpassing beauty and grandeur. Caught up in the spirit to a great and high mountain, the seer beholds the descent from heaven of the New Jerusalem¹, and the triumph

¹ The New Jerusalem is conceived as a city in direct contrast to Great Babylon. This is indicated not only by the opposite titles of "The Whore" and "The Bride," by which the respective cities are distinguished, but by the manner in which they are severally introduced. In the description given of them the seer is invited, and in almost similar terms, by "one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, to come hither," and behold the portrait of either city. In the case of the former, he is carried away in the spirit "into the wilderness" (cf. Isa. xxi. 1) : in the latter, in the same spirit, to a "great and high mountain" (cf. Ezek. xl. 2). In the former, he sees a woman (Rome) sitting upon a scarlet-coloured Beast, "who shall *ascend* out of the bottomless pit" ; in the latter, he beholds the "New Jerusalem *descending* out of heaven from God." In the

and bliss of the saints in the kingdom of Christ and of God. A new heaven and a new earth take the place of the first heaven and the first earth which have passed away, and the sea, always an object of terror to the ancient world (cf. Job vii. 12), exists no longer. The sufferings of the martyrs are forgotten in the rest of the joyous city, and the impatient cry "How long?" is hushed amidst the praises of grateful and adoring saints; for "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain (terms expressive of the agonies of martyrdom), for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, 'Behold I make all things new.'"

1. It is distinctly asserted of this heavenly city that *it is to be located upon earth*; ¹ the manner in which its earthward

former, the great city whose sins have reached unto heaven, is arrayed in meretricious guise, and clothed in "fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls"; in the latter, the converse picture is drawn of the holy city, "The Lamb's wife," whose foundations were garnished with all manner of precious stones, whose streets were of pure gold, and whose twelve gates were twelve pearls. In the former, the great city (Rome) is described as "rising up out of the sea"; in the latter, that dreaded element has disappeared, and "there is no more sea." In the former, the kings of the earth bewail Great Babylon, and "stand far off for fear of her torment"; in the latter, the kings of the earth do "bring the glory and honour of the nations" into New Jerusalem. In the former, a voice is heard: "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her"; in the latter, the twelve foundations of the new city are inscribed with the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. In the former, the desolation of Babylon is complete, and the plaintive wail, "No more at all," breaks forth with emphatic reiteration; in the latter, the felicity of the heavenly Jerusalem is set forth by the opposite negations of "No more curse. . . No night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever."

¹ "I will send an angel from heaven, and he shall cry with a loud voice,

descent is pointed out to the seer reminding us of the scene at the Temptation, when, in order to show to Jesus the kingdoms of this world, "the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain," from which lofty eminence he might see things below him. Hence it is described as "coming down from God out of heaven," "New Jerusalem which cometh down out of heaven from my God." Extravagant as the idea may appear to us, the writer evidently contemplated the descent from heaven to earth of a magnificent metropolis "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband," and fitted for the immediate reception of its blessed and glorious inhabitants. Ancient Rabbinical writings¹ confirm this supposition, and prove that the expectation of a new heaven, a new earth, and a new city, was not peculiar to the Apocalypse. The writer of "Pseudo-Esdras," as he contemplates the woman mourning in the field for the loss of her son—explained as an image of the destruction that came upon Jerusalem—sees her all at once changed into "a city builded, and a large place showing itself from the foundations," so resplendent with "the brightness of her glory and the comeliness of her beauty," that the former city is no longer remembered; "for in the place where the Highest beginneth to show his city there can no man's building be able to stand."² The Sibyl declares

saying: 'Hear, O earth, and be strong, saith the Lord, for I am coming down to thee.' And the voice of the angel shall be heard from one end of the world to the other, and unto the uttermost part of the abyss. And then all the host of the angels and of the many-eyed ones shall be shaken, and there shall be great confusion in heaven, and the nine petals (*πέταλα*) of the heaven shall be shaken, and fear and astonishment shall be upon all the angels. And then the heaven shall be rent asunder from the east to the west, and a multitude of angels without number shall come down upon the earth, and then the treasures of heaven shall be opened, and they shall bring down every precious thing, and the sweet savour of incense, and *Jerusalem adorned as a bride they shall bring down upon the earth.*"—*Apocryphal Apocalypse of John*, 17.

¹ "R. Jeremias dixit, Deus S. B. innovabit mundum suum et ædificabit Hierosolymam et ipsam descendere faciet in medium sui de cœlo, ita ut nunquam destruat."—*Sohar. Gen.* f. 69, c. 271.

² 2 Esdras x. 50-54.

that Messiah will make the chosen city more splendid than the sun, moon, and stars, and will build a tower extending over many furlongs and reaching to the very clouds; the site being probably identical with that of the ancient Jerusalem.¹ The Montanists believed that the New Jerusalem would descend from heaven on Pepuza, the centre of their religious community in Phrygia: "After me (said Maximilla, one of their prophetesses) comes the end of all things." A literal acceptance of this theory demands such an abandonment of common sense, that we are compelled to place the descent of the heavenly city amongst other sublime yet extravagant visions of the Apocalypse. It might be difficult to conceive of such a city now existing, or hereafter to exist, in the heavenly world; but the difficulty is enhanced when it is borne in mind that the new city is to be located amongst the nations of the earth. It ceases, therefore, to be a wonder that interpreters should have endeavoured to transfer its site from earth to heaven; and, in spite of positive statements to the contrary, to restore the city which cometh down from heaven to the sphere from which it is said to descend.

2. The description of the celestial city, given in the book itself, is calculated to deepen the impression of its unreal and visionary character. We confess that we experience a difficulty² in realizing the notion of a city forming either a quadrilateral of twelve thousand stadii in circumference, or, as some have supposed, a cube of three thousand stadii in length, and breadth, and height. The precious gems, moreover, of

¹ *Sibyll. Orac.* v. 414, 427.

² "Dixit Rabba, R. Jochananem dixisse, Deum S. B. tempore futuro Hierosolyma evecturum in altitudinem xii. milliarium. S. D. Zach. xiv. 10. Quid est 'in loco suo'? talem esse futuram superne, qualis est infra. Rabba dixit, Senex mihi narravit, se vidisse Hierosolymam priorem, quæ xii. milliarium erat. Dices, difficilem fore adscensum? sed scriptum est Isa. lx. 8: 'Jerusalem tempore futuro dilatabitur ita ut pertineat usque ad portas Damasci,' Zach. ix. 1. . . . et exaltabitur ut pertingat usque ad thronum gloriæ, donec dicatur 'Locus mihi angustus est.'"—*Bava Bathra*, f. 75, 2.

which the gates are composed, and with which the foundations of the walls are garnished, however familiar such ideas may have been to more ancient writers,¹ present conceptions which do not seem to come within the range of sober reality. The nature of the inhabitants who shall occupy the celestial city presents a further obstacle to the acceptance of the Apocalyptic vision. In the idea of the writer, they are heavenly and spiritual, and, at the same time, terrestrial and corporeal beings. Their immortality is described under a variety of significant emblems. They eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God, and of the hidden manna ; their names are inscribed in the Book of Life, and they are not hurt of the second death ; whilst at the same time they exercise qualities purely human and material, for they tread down the Gentile nations, and rule them with a rod of iron. It need scarcely be said that things earthly and things heavenly are here mixed up in wild confusion ; the Apocalyptic vision presenting the anomalous view of a celestial city set in the midst of surrounding heathen nations, who pursue their avocations much as usual.

3. Moreover, the narrow and exclusive spirit in which the privileges and glories of the new and heavenly city are conceived, betrays at once the partiality of the writer as well as the ideal nature of the city itself. With pardonable and patriotic consistency he inscribes it with the name of his own beloved Jerusalem, assigns to it "*twelve* gates, and at the gates *twelve* angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the *twelve* tribes of the children of Israel . . . and *twelve* foundations, and in them the names of the *twelve* Apostles² (St. Paul excluded) of the Lamb ;" places in it " the

¹ Tobit xiii. 16-18.

² It has been urged against the authenticity of the Revelation that the writer speaks of the twelve Apostles in an objective and historical way, as if he himself was not included among them ; but it is plain from the general tenor of the passage that a necessity existed for the use of the perfect number twelve.

tree of life which bare *twelve* manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month ;” measures the length and breadth of it *twelve thousand furlongs*, and the height of the wall an hundred and forty and four cubits—*twelve by twelve* ; locates in it the hundred and forty and four thousand—*twelve thousand by twelve*—of all the tribes of the children of Israel, and puts in their mouth a new song, which no man could learn but the hundred and forty and four thousand, the first fruits to God and the Lamb, which were redeemed from the earth. On the other hand, the Gentiles occupy a subordinate position ; such of them as are saved, walking by means of the light—*διὰ τοῦ φωτός*—of the heavenly city, and their kings, in meek submission, bringing (like the Persian monarchs of old) the glory and the costliness of the nations into it. Perhaps no figures could more adequately denote “the children’s bread,” than those which are here employed ; the writer evidently contemplating that the chosen people must “first be filled,” the heathen proselytes only “gathering up the crumbs which fall from their Master’s table.” We would charge this exclusiveness, in part, upon the vision seen by Ezekiel, of which the picture drawn in the Apocalypse is a palpable imitation. The restored city equally with the restored land, according to the elder prophet, was an inheritance to be divided by lot, among the twelve tribes alone,¹ “they that serve the city serving it out of all the tribes of Israel.” The imagery by which the celestial city is shadowed forth is also evidently borrowed from that employed in the latter chapters of Ezekiel, and accommodated by the writer to the times of the Messiah. As in the visions of God, Ezekiel is set upon a very high mountain “by which was as the frame of a city on the south ;”² so St. John is “carried away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shown that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.” In the vision of the elder prophet, which the writer of the Apocalypse has imitated with an almost servile fidelity, its measure-

¹ Ezek. xlvii. 13.

² Ibid. xl. 2.

ments are given with minute exactness;¹ the names of its gates are according to the names of the twelve tribes of Israel,² it has the glory of God,³ waters of life issue from the sanctuary,⁴ and trees bear fruit according to their months, whose leaves are "for medicine,"⁵ or, as the same idea is expressed in the Revelation, "for the healing of the nations." It seems difficult to believe that these points of resemblance should find a place in the respective prophecies, had not the former originated the conceptions, and, to some extent, supplied the terms of the latter. Whatever encouragement the earlier prophecy might have afforded to the Jews of the Captivity, it wears the aspect rather of what might have taken place had the twelve tribes returned from Babylon as a nation, than of the partial restoration effected by the two tribes which came back with Zerubbabel. The imperfect fulfilment, therefore, of the first prediction, left room for a second application, and, by the exercise of wonderful accommodative genius, the seer of Patmos has transferred the vision from the days of the Babylonish captivity to those of the last times.

4. The Advent, moreover, of the Messianic king, equally with the descent of the Messianic city, is from heaven (a doctrine abundantly recognised in other Scriptures of the New Testament), and his reign is to be *not in heaven, but on earth*. In the salutation to the seven Churches which are in Asia, Jesus is called "The Prince of the kings of the earth," a title which cannot be explained with fairness merely of spiritual sovereignty. In the epistle to the Church at Thyatira, the promise is made to the victor, of "power over the nations," and of ability to rule them with a rod of iron, and to break them in pieces as a potter's vessel, "even as he (Jesus) received of his Father;" referring, beyond doubt, to the dominion to be exercised by Jesus and his saints over the nations of the heathen world. This is reduced to cer-

¹ Ezek. xlviii. 16, 17.

² Ibid. xlviii. 31-35.

³ Ibid. xliii. 2, 5.

⁴ Ibid. xlvii. 1.

⁵ Ibid. xlvii. 12.

tainty by the declaration, "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, *and we shall reign on the earth.*"¹ Hence, when He cometh with clouds, from heaven to earth, "every eye shall see him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." Hence the kings of the earth and the great men, etc., conceal themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and call upon them to fall on them, and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb. Hence the Son of Man sitting upon the white cloud treads the winepress of the earth, and summons the fowls of heaven to feast on the flesh of kings and captains at the supper of the great God. Hence, too, with the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, great voices are heard saying, "*The kingdom of this world* is become that of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." It is conceived that these passages point to a reign of Jesus and his saints over the nations of the Gentile world, corresponding to the kingdom described by Daniel, which should break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms, and which should stand for ever. Examined from a literal point of view, and we have no evidence that any other was contemplated by the writer, they appear capable of the meaning we have assigned to them, and fully justify the chiliastic expectations of the primitive Church. And not only was the doctrine of a personal reign of Christ upon earth, during the Millennium, the settled belief of the age which followed the times of the Apostles, but the nineteenth century is bold enough to revive an opinion which the wisdom of the third century was content to repudiate. "That the Lord (says Dean Alford) will come in person to this our earth; that his risen elect will reign with him and judge . . . this is an expectation, not mine alone, but that of multitudes of Christ's waiting people, as it was that of his primitive Church before controversy blinded the eyes of the Fathers to the light of prophecy." If views like these are entertained by men from whom the Church has a right

¹ Rev. v. 10.

to expect learning and soberness, we cannot wonder at the follies of modern hierophants, nor be surprised that the latter should claim for their vaticinations the sanction of ecclesiastical authority.

5. Such to the sincere yet extravagant expectation fostered by national vanity and Jewish predilection is the new and heavenly Jerusalem. In painting the gorgeous picture, the seer of Patmos has passed out of the region of sober thought into that of dreamy fiction; the vision is seen not in the understanding but *in the spirit*, and the portrait limned with such artistic care is a splendid creation of sanctified genius rather than a trustworthy delineation of literal fact. It is, however, by no means improbable that the Apocalyptic sketch exhibits the earliest and most exclusive form of primitive Christian teaching. Three phases of religious thought may be recognised in the writings of the New Testament. The first, preserving the oldest Palestinian traditions respecting the person and ministry of Jesus when the conception of a future state took the form of a mundane theocracy, and the kingdom of heaven, with partial exceptions, was preached only to the Jews. The second, when the admission of the heathen to an equality of privileges with the favoured people in the new kingdom began to be entertained, a circumstance mainly attributable to the liberal teaching of St. Paul. The third, when Christianity had not only ceased to wear a Jewish aspect but had acquired a philosophical and even an Alexandrine shape, of which altered state of feeling abundant traces may be seen in the Fourth Gospel. The Revelation unquestionably belongs to the first of these divisions, and hence its narrow and Judaic, as well as its chiliastic and rabbinical character. In no other book of the sacred canon is the misapprehension which pervades the whole literature of the New Testament respecting the sudden and speedy advent of Messiah so conspicuous as in the Revelation. In no other book is the expectation of an approaching end of all things which negatives the probability of an indefinite future, and

leaves neither room nor time for remote calculations, asserted with such positiveness or said to be accompanied with such alarming and incredible phenomena. But although as time went on the theocratic vision of the seer of Patmos gave place to less material theories, it is not for us to look with disdain upon the anticipations of an earlier period, as the statesman who has risen from obscurity to eminence may not regard with contempt the humble cottage which gave him birth. If, as it has been said, it took three hundred years to mould the Christian Church into its present form, its original and most crude aspect, as presented in the Revelation, is entitled to a tender consideration as well as a deserved respect. To us it stands out, grey with age and venerable from association, as a landmark of a rude and primitive period ; bearing on its front the scars and seams inseparable from the imperfect apprehension of a past antiquity, yet clothed with a dignity which the feebleness of succeeding generations has vainly sought to imitate or excel.

EPILOGUE.

“And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true : and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly : blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not : for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book : worship God. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book : for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still : and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still : and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still : and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly ; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and

the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book : and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”—Rev. xxii. 6-21.

The Apocalypse closes, as it began, with the assertion expressed in distinct and positive terms, that the great catastrophe, of which it is the principal exponent, is of immediate accomplishment. “The Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants *things which must shortly be done*. Behold, *I come quickly*, blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” Indeed so impending is the event that the prophecy may not be sealed like that of Daniel, “*for the time is at hand* ;” the tide of approaching judgments rolling onwards with such rapidity that its waves overtake the unjust and the filthy, the righteous and the holy, *just as they are*, without space or opportunity for further change. We hesitate not to say that it would be difficult to express in terms of more definite precision the proximate and sudden character of Messiah’s Advent, and that, to the mind of a person unbiassed by previous considerations, this conclusion would be *primâ facie* inevitable. One note rings through all its seals, trumpets, and vials, “*The Lord is at hand*.” One burden is distinguishable through all its highly-wrought and varied symbols, “*Maran Atha*”—The Lord cometh. One cry is heard amidst the calamities brought upon Jewish and heathen cities, “*Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him*.” One word, uttered in a voice of thunder, by each of the four living creatures, reverberates through every page, COME, COME, COME, COME, till the last verse of the Apocalypse takes up its dying echoes, “AMEN, EVEN SO : COME, LORD JESUS.”

It will, then, we trust, be acknowledged that, as we premised, the Apocalypse can be interpreted as a whole of events which were expected to usher in the coming of Christ and the Messianic reign. From the prologue to the epilogue our exposition has been kept within the limit of these anticipations, and if the hope which they encouraged has not been verified, it is because the visions of the Revelation revolve around a grand *chimæra* of the approaching kingdom of God, which never has, and never will be realized.

CHAPTER XII.

UNREALITY OF THE SECOND ADVENT.

THAT the Second Advent was an event expected within the limits of the generation which heard the words of Jesus, is a position for which too much can be said to admit of superficial or contemptuous refutation. The writers of the New Testament (the fourth Gospel excepted) indulged the sanguine prospect of a speedy realization of an ideal future ; an anticipation which is as conspicuous in the synoptic Gospels as in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Epistles as in the Revelation. Paul, who received his Gospel not by man "but by the revelation of Jesus Christ ;" John, directed by special vision to write those "things which must shortly be done," equally with the rest of the apostles who listened to the teaching of Jesus and were commissioned by Him to make known that teaching to the world, appear to have been deeply impressed with the expectation of the sudden and speedy coming of Christ, and the accompanying end of all things. This expectation, so firmly entertained during the first century, has been corrected by the course of events, and in spite of traditional theories is beginning to lose its hold upon the public mind. "The fact (as has been honestly said) stares us in the face : we feel no satisfaction or security in attempting to conceal it : we cannot do so if we would."

An effort has, however, been made to save the predictions recorded in the New Testament from the condemnation which their failure might be thought to deserve, and it is now maintained that Jesus did not share the Messianic anticipations of his countrymen, but that they were attributed to Him after his death by the sanguine hopes of his followers. It is hard for us however to believe, with the New Testament in our hands,

that the expectation so prevalent in the early Church of the speedy Advent of Christ had no deeper foundation than the imagination of the disciples themselves, and to exclude the eschatological element from the teaching of Jesus looks like an attempt to vindicate the dignity of the Master at the expense of the records which contain his history. To an unprejudiced mind it will not appear more strange that Jesus should have adopted the Messianic theories of his countrymen, than that He should have shared the common notions of the Jews on the subject of demoniacal possession, or on that of the relation of disease to sins ; and we confess that we find it difficult to reconcile a limited apprehension of natural phenomena with an infallible knowledge of supernatural events. Should the objection be raised that Jesus in his human nature was liable to error, but that in his higher and divine nature it was impossible for him to be mistaken, it might be sufficient to answer that the Synoptists had faint if any, perception of the divinity of Jesus, and that but for the Fourth Gospel that doctrine might never have been made known to the world. Or should it be urged that Jesus accommodated his teaching to the prejudices of those whom He addressed, it might be said again that such accommodation is unworthy of a teacher sent from God. With the deepest respect for the reverential feeling which has suggested this mode of saving the Great Master from the charge of error, we regret that the interests of truth will not permit us to accept this ingenious apology. To ascribe the eschatological theories recorded in the New Testament solely to the misconceptions of the followers of Jesus, argues either culpable indistinctness on the part of the Teacher or gross incapacity on that of the taught—an imputation the more painful when the claims to infallibility usually ascribed to them are taken into account.

A second theory supposes that the coming of Christ at the end of the world is an event yet future—a theory which although it has the sanction of so-called orthodoxy, is contradicted by the concurrent testimony of the New Testament.

Strenuous efforts have been made to postpone an event which was declared to be of almost immediate accomplishment, beyond its natural limits, and the violent manner in which the text has been hewn in pieces to preserve at any cost, whether of scholarship or integrity, the infallibility of stereotyped opinions, savours almost of desperation. A more painful position can hardly be imagined than that of the student of prophecy who, by postponing the latter-day anticipations of the New Testament to the future because no fulfilment can be found in the past, endeavours to reconcile the Scriptural theory of the Advent with traditional teaching. He is anxious to maintain that the final consummation is an event yet in the womb of the future, whilst inspired teaching assures him that centuries have come and gone since "the end of all things was at hand."¹ He endeavours to separate the coming of Christ to judgment from the destruction which fell upon Jerusalem, whilst the synoptic Gospels, that of St. Luke especially, connect the two events in terms which defy the efforts of theologians to dissociate them. He labours to support the theory that the Gospel must be preached, as a witness, to every creature before the end should come, and that the various missionary societies of Christendom are diligently fulfilling that object ; but he finds that in Apostolic days the sound of evangelical truth had already gone forth into "all the world," and that, in St. Paul's time, the Gospel was "preached to every creature which is under heaven." Although the end of the world, or age, is among those events which are asserted to take place within the term of the natural life of those who listened to the predictions of Jesus, his religious sensibilities are pained to learn that the end of the world having been vainly assigned to former periods, is definitely fixed for the present era ; the falsification of previous calculations being found unequal to deter modern prophets from hazarding other attempts, to be again falsified and deferred in their turn.

¹ 1 Pet. iv. 7.

² Col. i. 23.

Added to this, the same words and phrases have been made to have opposite meanings not only in writings of the same age but in the mouths of the same men. When Jesus says, "My time is *at hand*," or St. Paul, "The time of my departure is *at hand*;" the expression "*at hand*" is allowed to mean something near and impending; but when the same Apostle says, "The Lord is *at hand*," or St. Peter, "The end of all things is *at hand*," the phrase is distorted to signify something distant and future. In like manner when St. Paul says, "I will come unto you *shortly* if the Lord will," the passage is properly and naturally explained of a visit which was soon to take place; but when the same Apostle says, "But this I say, brethren, the time is *short*," the event is dishonestly postponed. So, in the exhortation of St. Paul to Timothy, the phrase, "*Till I come*,"¹ is allowed to refer to a visit which he hoped shortly to pay to his own son in the faith: but the limitation expressed in the words, "If I will that he tarry *till I come*," is interpreted of a very different interval. So when Jesus affirms, "Yet *a little while* I am with you," it is allowed that He referred to a brief sojourn with his disciples of a few months; but when the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews declares, "Yet *a little while*, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry," the same phrase is interpreted of an interval of hundreds of years. "If (says Mr. Maurice) the writer told the hearers and readers of his day that the time was at hand, did he not mean them to understand that it *was* at hand? Can he possibly have designed that what he expresses so definitely should be taken indefinitely? Can he have supported a divine promise with an assurance which was belied by the event, or else with what, in an uninspired writer, we should call a pious fraud?" It may then be legitimately asked upon what principle can the same expressions be interpreted of something impending in one case and something distant in another; and how can an event declared to be "*at hand*," "*nearer*," "*approaching*,"

¹ 1 Tim. iv. 13.

"*drawing nigh*," "*ready to be revealed*," about to take place "*shortly*," and within "*a little while*," be wire-drawn to refer to an event which has not yet been consummated? Such an elastic system of interpretation finds no countenance from the Bible itself, and is vicious enough, if carried to its full extent, to hold up the interpretation of Scripture to the merited scorn of the infidel, and to make "the more sure word of prophecy" the most uncertain of all.

It is time, therefore, to call attention to the false position occupied by those who ignore the difficulties with which the subject of the Second Advent is encompassed, and who, without fear of contradiction, give utterance to unmeaning platitudes respecting an approaching end of all things which contrast strangely with the conclusions of more sober minds. But however we may deplore, we are unable to condemn this positiveness, as these alarming theories are sanctioned by the formularies of the Church of which they are ministers. It is plain that to cure the evil we must get at the root of the matter, and this is the object we have proposed to ourselves in this undertaking. We shall endeavour to show from the writings of the New Testament that the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven was an event expected, *although not realized*, within the limits of the then existing generation, and that consequently the so-called orthodox view which defers that event to an epoch yet future, is in direct antagonism to the most explicit declarations of Holy Writ. As the dogma we are about to call in question is expressed in the Creeds, not only of the Established Church but of universal Christendom, it would seem necessary that the arguments advanced to establish a contrary position should be of the most sure and convincing kind; resting not merely upon solitary and isolated texts, but affording an uninterrupted series of proofs which, interlacing one with another like the shields of warriors of old time, should form so strong a phalanx of evidence, as not only to justify an attack upon a recognised article of faith, but to leave its defenders without

excuse. To this conflict we now address ourselves, and we are not ashamed to say that we enter upon it with feelings subdued by the magnitude and importance of the issues involved. We desire no victory but that of Truth. We anticipate no advantage, but rather loss, even if it should be proved incontestably that we are in the right. If a different verdict should be pronounced, it will still be a satisfaction to remember that we err in closest sympathy with our Lord and his Apostles, whose Advent theories, and not our own, we proceed to enunciate.

For the sake of perspicuity, it will be necessary to have recourse to the following divisions :—

I. *Texts which define within prescribed limits the time of the Coming.*

II. *Texts in which the speediness of the Coming is either directly asserted, or indirectly implied.*

III. *Texts which represent the end of the world as imminent in the Apostolic age.*

IV. *Texts which speak of the days of the Apostles as the last days.*

V. *Texts whose scope is limited by the period of the Second Advent.*

VI. *The Gospel of the kingdom preached by Jesus and his disciples.*

I. *Texts which define within prescribed limits the time of the Coming.*

1. The great prophecy uttered by, or attributed to, our Master respecting his Second Advent, which is here treated as the direct prediction¹ of Jesus, is found Matt. xxiv., xxv. ;

¹ These short Apocalypses, uttered by or attributed to Jesus, are of unequal claim to consideration in spite of their prophetic character, being true up to a certain point, and false beyond it. The persecution of the disciples and the calamities which befel the Jewish nation are recorded with a strict regard to historical veracity ; the coming of Christ which should take place immediately after that tribulation, failed to receive an

Mark xiii.; Luke xxi. Four of his disciples, Peter and James, and John and Andrew, ask Him privately as He sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, when the magnificent building should be destroyed, the ruin of which He had just foretold, and what should be the sign of his coming, and of the end of the world, or age? That the questions proposed to Him did not relate to events separated by great intervals,¹ is evident from the fact that the accomplishment of both is comprehended, in his answer, within the limits of the then existing generation,—a position confirmed by the direction given to the disciples to provide for their own personal safety, not only during the calamities coming upon Jerusalem, but during those which should accompany his Advent at the end of the age. To a straightforward question He gave a straightforward answer. He said, indeed, that the precise day and hour when “these things” should be was not known to the angels, nor to Himself; but that “*all these things*” (including not only the destruction of the temple but his stupendous coming in the clouds of heaven) should be accomplished before that generation had passed away.

“Tell us,” they say to Him, “when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world.” Did Jesus determine that “WHEN”? We give the answer in the words of St. Matthew: “*When* ye there-

accomplishment. Since then these writers were acquainted with real events till nearly the end of the Jewish war (Luke apparently exceeds this limit) but ignorant beyond it, it follows that the parts of the prophecy which are true were written after the event, and that the subsequent portions were anticipations of events which have been negated by the course of history.

¹ It may indeed be argued that some deference is due to the united voice of Christendom, which in all ages has interpreted these prophecies, partly of the destruction of Jerusalem, and partly of the end of the world; a theory faulty in its first principles, as a system of interpretation is demanded which shall recognise in the celebrated prophecy recorded in the synoptics, not two separate events sundered from each other by a great interval, but two distinct parts of the same event bound together by a common period of accomplishment.

fore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place—*then* let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains—and woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck *in those days*—for *then* shall be great tribulation—and except *those days* should be shortened there should no flesh be saved, but for the elects' sake *those days* shall be shortened. Immediately after the tribulation of *those days* shall the sun be darkened, etc.,—and *then* shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and *then* shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”¹ We affirm confidently and without hesitation, that according to St. Matthew, the glorious advent of the Son of Man to judgment was expected “*immediately after the tribulation of those days.*”

Similar circumstantiality with regard to time and place is observable in St. Mark. “Tell us *when* shall these things be, and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?” The answer corresponds with that of the preceding Evangelist: “When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not (let him that readeth understand), *then* let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains. But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck *in those days*; for *in those days* shall be affliction such as was not from the beginning of the creation, which God created *unto this time*, neither shall be. And except that the Lord had shortened *those days* no flesh should be saved, but for the elects' sake whom he hath chosen he hath shortened the days. And *then* if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there, believe him not. But *in those days* after that tribulation the sun shall be darkened, etc., and *then* shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.”²

St. Luke, with some variation from the preceding accounts

¹ Matt. xxiv. 15-30.

² Mark xiii. 4-26.

significant of a time of composition later than the invasion of Judea by the Romans, adds his testimony to the same effect : “Master, but *when* shall these things be, and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass ?” To which it is replied : “*When* ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies—*then* let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck *in those days*, for there shall be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, etc.—and *then* shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.”¹

We are persuaded that it is simply impossible for an unprejudiced and honest inquirer, who reads the New Testament with the view of finding out the truth, and not for the sake of maintaining a foregone conclusion, to avoid the force of all these “*whens*” and “*thens*,” or to escape the conviction that Jesus was giving directions for an immediate and not for a far distant emergency. Our Lord, moreover, confirmed these statements in a manner which leaves no room for doubt. He appealed to common sense from the course of nature by the parable of the fig-tree, and wound up the most minute and circumstantial prophecy in the New Testament, with the clenching words,—

“Verily I say unto you, *this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.*”²

“Verily I say unto you, that *this generation shall not pass till all these things be done.*”³

“Verily I say unto you, *this generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled.*”⁴

“*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*”⁵

Taken in its plain and obvious sense, this discourse asserts

¹ Luke xxi. 7-27.

² Matt. xxiv. 34.

³ Mark xiii. 30.

⁴ Luke xxi. 32.

⁵ Matt. xxiv. 35 ; Mark xiii. 31 ; Luke xxi. 33.

positively, not only that the temple and the city should be destroyed within a few years, but that the existing order of the world should be brought to an end, and the final judgment of all mankind be completed within the lifetime of the then present generation. The inconsistency of this prophetic announcement (of which a part only was fulfilled within the required limits) with the subsequent history of the world, presents the gravest difficulty. Efforts have accordingly been made to prove that in different parts of the same discourse, Jesus referred both to the destruction of Jerusalem, and to the final judgment of all mankind. This theory which is received by all orthodox persons, stands or falls with the presence or absence of definite notes of time assigning the several parts of the discourse to the two different events of which it treats.

These marks of time are not to be found; and the commentators move at random, parcelling out the various portions of the discourse to one or other event much at their own convenience. The first attempt to assign all to the destruction of Jerusalem until we reach Matt. xxv. 31, is utterly untenable, and indeed absurd. No words can be plainer than those of Matt. xxiv. 29, 30, 31. If they do not denote the visible coming of the Son of Man in heaven to exercise judgment over all the tribes of earth, no words whatever suffice to enunciate this doctrine. Nothing but the extreme stress of the difficulty, extreme reluctance to admit the ignominious failure of prophecy, could ever drive a sensible man to pretend that these three verses mean nothing but the overthrow of one city—the dissolution of one nation.

This attempt having failed, the next effort is to throw back the point of transition, and it has thus been maintained that the destruction of the city and temple is spoken of only to the end of the 28th verse of chapter xxiv., the remainder referring altogether to the yet future judgment at the end of the world. The answer is that even in the first Gospel the final consummation is announced as coming “immediately after” the former tribulation (εὐθέως δὲ μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν τῶν

ἡμερῶν ἐκείνων); and to avoid this difficulty, it is stated that the word translated *immediately* implied not chronological sequence, but the abrupt or unexpected occurrence of an event indefinitely distant. Thus Matthew is taken to mean, "When the tribulation of the days in which Jerusalem shall be destroyed shall have passed away, then, after some indefinite interval which may amount to myriads of years, all of a sudden the great consummation will fall like a thunderbolt upon mankind." To this the reply is (1) that the interpretation is ungrammatical, and that if this be the meaning of the words translated *immediately* (εὐθέως δέ), any words may be made to mean anything; (2) That the parallel passage in Mark (xiii. 24) states distinctly that the signs of the final consummation shall be seen in the very days which follow the former tribulation (ἀλλ' ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν ἐκείνην); and (3) that Jesus himself is described as saying that everything should be accomplished within the limits of the existing generation.

Driven to bay, yet not altogether despairing, such writers have sought to show that the word *generation* (γενεά) does not mean that which is popularly denoted by it, but either a "nation," or a "dispensation." Some try to interpret it of the Jewish nation. The answer is that Jesus, speaking to those who had asked Him for the signs which should precede the destruction of the city and the second coming of Messiah, tells them (after speaking of the darkening of the sun and moon and the sending forth of the angels, 29-31), "Likewise ye, when ye see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors (33)"; and then follows the solemn assurance that that generation should not pass away till all be fulfilled. . . . It follows that in these discourses Jesus is described as placing in the closest connection the fall of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and the end of the world; and that this connection has been falsified by subsequent history." (The English Life of Jesus, pp. 255, 256.)

2. The passages which precede the accounts of the Trans-

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2. The passages which precede the accounts of the Trans-

figuration afford additional proof of the limits within which the Advent was expected to take place.

"For the Son of Man shall (*soon*) come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works : Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here *which shall not taste of death* till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." ¹

"Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels ; and he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here *which shall not taste of death* till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." ²

"Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels : but I tell you of a truth there be some standing here *which shall not taste of death* till they see the kingdom of God." ³

That these texts do not relate to the circumstances which took place at the Transfiguration, although that remarkable event may have been an anticipation of "the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ," ⁴ or, perhaps, as Strauss has supposed, an effort to make good the disappointed expectation of the actual coming, is evident from the fact that mention is made of a coming *with the holy angels to reward every man according to his works*, which certainly was not the case at the Transfiguration ; neither is it probable that the solemn asseveration, "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom," could have been employed in reference to an event which occurred some six or eight days afterwards.

3. The next proof which we adduce as assigning a pre-

¹ Matt. xvi. 27, 28.

² Mark viii. 38 ; ix. 1.

³ Luke ix. 26, 27.

⁴ 2 Pet. i. 16.

scribed limit for the Second Advent is found in the answer given by Jesus to the high priest immediately before his execution, and this comes to us with the greater force because of the solemnity of the inquiry as well as the critical situation in which Jesus was placed. The question, as given by the three Evangelists, is as follows :—

“I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God?”¹

“Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?”²

“Art thou the Christ, tell us?”³

What reply did our Lord make to these interrogations, dictated, perhaps, not by a spirit of captious inquiry, but by a feeling of deep and reverential piety?

“Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said; nevertheless, I say unto you, hereafter⁴ shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.”⁵

“And Jesus said, I am; and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.”⁶

“Hereafter⁷ shall the Son of Man sit on the right hand of the power of God.”⁸

It will be observed that in answer to the most weighty and solemn question which the Jewish nation, in the person of their high priest, ever put to Jesus, he gave out as a proof of his Messiahship that *from just now* (an expression never used except of events shortly to take place), or, *from the now* (words found in five other places of the New Testament, and invariably employed of things immediately about to happen),

¹ Matt. xxvi. 63.

² Mark xiv. 61.

³ Luke xxii. 67.

⁴ ἀπ’ ἀπρὶ—*from just now*. Cf. Matt. xxvi. 29, 64; John i. 51; John xiii. 19; John xiv. 7.

⁵ Matt. xxvi. 64.

⁶ Mark xiv. 62.

⁷ ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν—*from the now*. Cf. Acts xviii. 6; Luke xii. 52; Luke v. 10; Luke i. 48; 2 Cor. v. 16.

⁸ Luke xxii. 69.

they whom he addressed should "see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

4. Another passage determining the period of the Advent is found in Matt. x. 23: "But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye to another, for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have exhausted¹ the cities of Israel, *till the Son of Man be come.*" Should it be said that missionaries generally are denoted in this charge, and not the disciples in particular; how is the statement of Matt. xi. 1 to be got over, "When Jesus had made an end of commanding his *twelve disciples*"? Should it be thought that the cities of Israel are not yet gone over, we answer that not only have the cities of Israel ceased to exist, but that the cities of Israel *then existing* are the cities meant, for it is said, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." It is conceived that it is out of the power of logic to controvert, or of sophistry to evade, this decided testimony to the precise period of the Advent. Indeed we cannot conceive of any reply being made to it, unless it should be thought that by the expression "*till the Son of man be come,*" is meant only until the destruction of Jerusalem: an interpretation which would be indignantly rejected if applied to the duration of that sacramental act whereby the Lord's death was to be announced "*till he come.*"²

We are disposed to think the passages now adduced, examined in their natural and non-controversial sense, conclusive with regard to the limits within which the Advent was expected to take place. If we could admit, which no honest critic could possibly do, that the phrase "this generation" means in this solitary instance the present state of the Jewish people, how is the statement to be got over that the Son of Man would come "*immediately* after the tribulation of those days"? If, in defiance of the natural sense of words, we

¹ τελέσσετε.

² 1 Cor. xi. 26.

could allow that the term "immediately" is to be deprived of its obvious meaning, the difficulty meets us that another evangelist, by declaring that Christ would come "*in those days after that tribulation*" (the days and tribulation before referred to), still further precludes the possibility of any interval between the tribulation and the Advent itself. If the expression "those days," so often repeated, could be made to refer to other than the evil days about to come upon the Jewish people, still the force of the declaration, "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel *till the Son of Man be come*," remains untouched. Besides, no man with a reputation for scholarship will be anxious to explain away the sense of proximity implied in the terms, "*From just now*," "*From the now*," or to deny that, according to the common acceptance of words, the Advent was to be *seen*¹ by the men whom Jesus addressed. It is not, however, with feelings of exultation but of sorrow, that we call attention to the fact that this anticipation of an immediate Advent was not verified by the result. That and succeeding generations passed away without witnessing the realisation of the much-desired event. Wrought to the highest pitch of expectation by the assurances

¹ That an actual objective appearance of Christ was intended may be gathered from the fact that the Advent is uniformly represented in the New Testament as an event which "in God's time he shall *shew*" (1 Tim. vi. 15), which the inhabitants of the world should *see*, which should surprise them in the midst of their usual avocations, and on account of which they should either rejoice or mourn. It is further described as accompanied by events perceptible to human sense, as the resurrection of the dead from their earthly graves, the rapture of the living to meet the Lord in the air as He descends in clouds to this world, and the partial destruction of the material universe. Messiah is said moreover to be attended by all his saints, and to come with all the holy angels with Him. He is also to sit upon the throne of his glory, to summon all the nations of the earth before Him to judgment, and to consign some to everlasting life and some to everlasting fire (Matt. xxv. 31-46)—a description of which it has been said that it "resists every attempt to give it a merely symbolical meaning, and as the Church always understood it in the literal meaning of the words, so it was also certainly meant by Jesus if it was really given by Him."

of their Master's speedy return, the Christians of that age looked upwards till their eyes were weary, yet saw no Messiah coming in the clouds of heaven. The recorded prophecy was true only in part, and failed at the crisis to which the foregoing signs had served to direct attention. It is plain then that we must make our choice between two alternatives, each equally distressing and subversive of traditional views, and must allow that either our Lord himself was in error, or that the latter-day anticipations recorded in the Gospels did not proceed from Him. It will be the task of the Church of the future to grapple with this momentous question, and to reconcile, if it may be done, the conflicting theories evoked by a comparison of the teaching of Scripture on this subject with received opinions; a task that will try her powers to the utmost, and in the execution of which former weapons of defence will be thrown aside like the bows and arrows of our forefathers, which had become useless. Whatever apathy may now prevail on the subject, the time must come when the question mooted in these pages can no longer be passed over in contemptuous silence, nor evaded by the sophisms which have hitherto been used to defend it; when religious science shall no longer be suffered to claim exemption from the ordeal applied to other sciences, and when that which is adventitious and untenable in the Christianity of the past will give place to that which is intrinsic and abiding in the Christianity of the future.

II. *Texts in which the speediness of the Coming is either directly asserted or indirectly implied.*

The most prominent of these we lay before our readers without comment, leaving the letter of Scripture to be its own, and its best, interpreter.

“Now is our salvation *nearer* (ἐγγύτερον) than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is *at hand* (ἤγγικεν).”¹

¹ Rom. xiii. 11, 12.

"The time is short (ὁ καιρὸς συνεσταλμένος τὸ λοιπὸν ἐστί)." ¹

"The Lord is *at hand* (ἐγγύς)." ²

"So much the more as ye see the day *approaching* (ἐγγίζουσιν)." ³

"For yet *a little while* (μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον—*breviſ-simum adhuc temporis spatium*), and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." ⁴

"The coming of the Lord *draweth nigh* (ἤγγικε)." ⁵

"The end of all things is *at hand* (ἤγγικε)." ⁶

"*A little while* not seeing him (ἄρτι μὴ ὁρῶντες)." ⁷

"Behold, I come *quickly* (ταχύ)." ⁸

"The time is *at hand* (ἐγγύς)." ⁹

"Surely I come *quickly* (ταχύ). Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." ¹⁰

1. The writers of the New Testament do not appear to have entertained the idea that the Advent would be delayed beyond the limits assigned by their Master. The solemn declaration of Jesus recorded in the synoptics, that He would return within the lifetime of the then existing generation, had sunk deeply into their hearts, and the expectation of this event ever rose up prominently before them like some huge mountain set in the midst of a plain, visible from all points and at all times. Hence the absorbing idea, either expressed or implied, which runs, like a thread, through the literature of the New Testament, and which is incorporated into every form and phase of Christian doctrine. Hence the Advent is the starting-point from which spring all motives to obedience, zeal, and holiness; in which centre all hopes of salvation and blessedness; and without which the religion of Jesus would indeed have been an admirable system of ethics, but could hardly have deserved the name of Christianity. The apostles

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 29.

⁴ Heb. x. 37.

⁷ 1 Pet. i. 8.

² Phil. iv. 5.

⁵ James v. 8.

⁸ Rev. xxii. 7, 12.

¹⁰ Rev. xxii. 20.

³ Heb. x. 25.

⁶ 1 Pet. iv. 7.

⁹ Rev. xxii. 10.

may be said to have been men not of one book but of one thought. Would they urge upon their countrymen the necessity of immediate repentance, they exhorted them to "*save themselves from this untoward generation.*"¹ Would they stimulate watchfulness, they pleaded, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness that *that day* should overtake you as a thief."² Would they deter from apostacy, they spoke of "fiery indignation which shall (*soon*) devour the adversaries."³ Would they exhibit the doom of the false teachers of those last days, they represented their "judgment as now of a long time *lingering not*, and their damnation *slumbering not.*"⁴ Would they quicken ministerial fidelity; they gave a charge "before God and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall (*soon*) judge the quick and the dead *at his appearing and his kingdom.*"⁵ Would they constrain affection, they employed the threat, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema *Maran-atha.*"⁶ Would they inculcate obedience to apostolic precepts, they besought "*by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"⁷ Would they terrify the ungodly and the unbelieving, they drew the picture of "*the Lord Jesus revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"⁸ Would they sum up the substance of Christian doctrine in a single phrase, they taught that "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, *looking for that blessed hope and manifestation of the glory of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*"⁹

2. Moreover many of the precepts of the New Testament appear morally defective, except on the supposition that they were delivered in the anticipation of the immediate dissolution of the material world. The improvident command, "Take therefore no thought (no over-anxious care, *μέριμνα*) for

¹ Acts ii. 40.² 1 Thess. v. 4.³ Heb. x. 27.⁴ 2 Pet. ii. 3.⁵ 2 Tim. iv. 1.⁶ 1 Cor. xvi. 22.⁷ 2 Thess. ii. 1.⁸ 2 Thess. i. 7, 8.⁹ Titus ii. 12, 13.

the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself," can only be justified by the more important consideration of "seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." The apparently harsh prohibition to the son who wished first to bury his father, "Suffer the dead to bury their dead," can only be excused by the urgent necessity of preaching the advent of the impending kingdom. The charge of the Apostle to the Philippians, "Be careful for nothing," is only intelligible when read in the light of the preceding clause, "The Lord is at hand." The vindication of celibacy on account of "the present distress," as well as the disregard of domestic and social obligations,¹ can only be satisfactorily accounted for by the superior influence of the all-absorbing expectation: "The fashion (*outward form*) of this world passeth away." The indifference to change of social condition implied in the words, "Art thou a slave? care not for it. Mayest thou be free? use it rather."² "Art thou bound to a wife? seek not release. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife:"³ can only be explained by the fact that no time was supposed to be left for the alteration of outward circumstances. The omission of all allusion to the shortness of life as a prevailing motive to duty and obedience which characterises the writings of the New Testament, can be best accounted for on the supposition that the coming of the Lord should precede that natural consummation. Under the overpowering conviction of the nearness of the impending Advent, the disciples are further exhorted by their Master to indiscriminate charity and to unconcern respecting their worldly possessions. They are bid to give to every one that asked an alms, and not to lay up property for future necessities. The salvation of those who having great possessions failed to comply with this demand is despaired of, and the rich, simply because they are rich, are pronounced disqualified for the kingdom of God. Indeed of what use could riches be to those who were taught

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 26-31.² 1 Cor. vii. 21.³ 1 Cor. vii. 27.

to expect every moment the dissolution of earthly things and the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven? To such the world had no future, but was already passing away. Unprovided with the common necessities of life,¹ required to abandon all worldly schemes of advancement, and to forsake, nay even to hate, those whose claims upon their services were most natural and pressing,² occupied, at the risk of their lives, and to the neglect of all other duties, with the office of preaching the good news of the approaching kingdom to the very time of the Advent itself,³ the first emissaries of Christianity lived in an atmosphere of thought and feeling within which it is difficult for us to penetrate. As the motives which directed their conduct were above the level of human experience, so their actions are not to be judged by the rules applied to those of ordinary men. Suffice it to say that they were the willing subjects of an enthusiasm which perhaps has never been equalled, and which then seemed to have reasonable grounds for its exercise; the necessity of announcing to mankind without delay the important message with which they had been entrusted being, in their estimation, a sufficient excuse for the neglect of other, and even of the most sacred, obligations.

To this it may be added that many of these precepts, framed as they were in anticipation of an immediate dissolution of all things, are impracticable, and unsuited to the actual condition of society. It is simply a truism to say that Christians of the present day could not, even if they were so disposed, obey some of the plainest commands of the Gospel. Not to speak of counsels of perfection as they are called (*e.g.*, Matt. v. 48), which are far removed out of human imitation, where is the man wrongfully dispossessed of his coat, willing to give up his cloak also; or forced against his will to go a mile, ready to go twice that distance with his harsh compeller; or again, smitten on the one cheek, presenting the other to the striker; or defrauded of his property, refusing to

¹ Matt. x. 9, 10.

² Luke xiv. 26.

³ Ibid. x. 23.

appeal to the law for its recovery? However suited these commands may have been to a particular age and an exalted condition of thought, they are foreign to modern notions, and practically obsolete.¹ And not only are some of the precepts of Christianity relegated by their unique character to apostolic times, but no adequate provision is made in the New Testament for the future guidance and direction of mankind. The progress of the human race in knowledge and civilization is a subject which does not come within its cognizance; the great question of education as a means of mental and moral improvement is totally ignored; no encouragement is held out to art and science; no legal or sanitary reforms are advocated; no appliances recommended for the better cultivation of the earth, or for the welfare of its inhabitants—but in the place of all these, men are commanded to “*seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness.*” These omissions are not so much the fault as the natural product of Christian teaching. If the

¹ The impracticable nature of many of the Christian precepts has been ably stated by a Jewish writer. Speaking of a perfect Christian, he says, “As a faithful disciple of Jesus he would, were he born to riches, give them all to the poor, reduce himself to beggary, deprive himself of all the influence and advantages which wealth bestows, would promote pauperism, and assist in bringing on mankind all those evils which social economy so clearly proves to be the consequence of mendicancy. Were he a magistrate, or judge on the bench, he would, instead of pronouncing sentence on the culprit, declare, ‘Let him that is guiltless cast the first stone,’ and permit the offender to escape with a paternal admonition to sin no more. Were he a prime minister, he would tamely submit to an insult from a foreign power rather than vindicate the honour of his country by severe measures, since a perfect Christian is not allowed to resent harsh terms, and is only to employ gentle words. Were he a general, he would throw away the sword before the battle, as the effusion of blood does not become a soldier of the Prince of Peace. Were he a wayfarer, he would have to present his inner garment to the robbers just stripping him of the outer one. Were he assailed he would have humbly to ask the ruffian for an additional blow on the cheek spared the infliction. Is it necessary to dilate upon the state of a society consisting of such perfect Christians? The Italian proverb, that he that makes himself a lamb will be devoured by the wolf, would soon be exemplified” (“Christianity and Judaism,” by Dr. Benisch, p. 14).

writers believed that within the space of that generation every thing was to be revolutionized by the descent of Christ from heaven with his holy angels, it would have been superfluous to prescribe a permanent code of morals for a world already beginning to pass away. "Seeing that this visible earth was speedily to be burnt up, no wise man would busy himself to improve its surface. Better irrigation, or cultivation, better roads, better laws of land, better condition for the poor, better government, equally with improved astronomy, or other science, were matters of little worth to one who expected a Divine Governor and Avenger shortly to appear in the clouds of heaven" (Professor F. Newman).

III. *Texts which represent the end of the world as imminent in the Apostolic age.*

According to Jewish notions, time was divided into two portions,¹ the age which preceded and that which followed the Advent of Messiah.² The end of the world, or age, is not therefore, as has been conjectured, the consummation of the Jewish economy, but a literal "end of all things" introducing the Messianic reign. We adduce some passages which represent this "end of the world" as imminent in the Apostolic age.

¹ The αἰὼν ὁ νῦν and the αἰὼν ὁ μέλλων.

² That the Messianic age or world (*soon*) to come, was supposed to abut on the age or world that then was, may be inferred from Heb. vi. 5, where the Hebrew converts are said to have "already tasted the powers of the world to come"; and that a literal and not merely a spiritual reign was expected, may be gathered from Heb. ii. 5-10, where the (habitable) world to come, τὴν οἰκουμένην τὴν μέλλουσαν, is not put in subjection unto angels but unto Jesus and glorified men. With similar recognition of its proximity, the same writer describes Christians as already come "unto Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God the heavenly Jerusalem," anticipating possibly the glorious visions depicted in the Apocalypse. So (1 Cor. iii. 22) things actually present ἐνεστώτα, and things immediately future μέλλοντα, are said to be simultaneously in the possession of the saints; which could not have been the case had the present and the future age been separated by a great interval.

1. Not to repeat the question put by the disciples to their Master¹ which elicited the reply that "the end of the world" should take place before that generation had passed away; nor yet to insist on the fact that in the parables of the tares and the wheat, and of the net² cast into the sea, "the end of the world," or age, is the season of final separation between the bad and the good at the advent of Messiah, a period already sufficiently defined—other texts assert with greater distinctness "the end of the world" to be imminent in the Apostolic age. Amongst these we may instance: "Now all these things happened unto them, for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition upon whom *the ends of the worlds are come*,"⁴ where the days of the Apostles themselves are evidently thought to conclude the age. So it is affirmed of the sacrifice of Christ,⁵ "Now once *in the end of the worlds*"⁶ hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," where the death of Christ is said to take place at the end of the ages, proving incontestably that the consummation was then supposed to be very near. So St. Peter declares,⁷ "*The end of all things is at hand*,"⁸ this tense of the verb always implying something near and impending.⁹ So in the text so much misrepresented and misunderstood, "Lo, I am with you all the days, *even unto the end of the age*,"¹⁰ Jesus promised to be with his disciples in a *miraculous*¹¹ way unto the then approaching consummation, and not, as has been ignorantly asserted, with the ministers of the Church unto the so-called end of the world.¹² To these may be added such passages as "He that endureth

¹ Matt. xxiv. 3.

³ 1 Cor. x. 11.

⁵ Heb. ix. 26.

⁷ 1 Pet. iv. 7.

⁹ Cf. Matt. xxvi. 46.

² Ibid. xiii. 47.

⁴ τὰ τέλη τῶν αἰώνων κατήντησεν.

⁶ ἐπὶ συντελείᾳ τῶν αἰώνων.

⁸ ἤγγικε.

¹⁰ ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἵωνος.

¹¹ "Rise up, therefore, and go into the city of the barbarians and preach in it, *and I will be with you in the wonders that are done in it by your hands*."—*Acta Petri et Andreae*.

¹² Cf. Mark xvi. 20; Heb. ii. 3, 4.

to the end shall be saved : ” ¹ “ Who shall confirm you *unto the end* : ” ² “ I trust ye shall acknowledge even *to the end* : ” ³ “ If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm *unto the end* : ” ⁴ “ the end ” in these and other passages, not being the end of the material world, but the end of the age to be followed by the reign of Messiah.

And in marked contrast to modern hierophants, the teachers of the apostolic age gave practical evidence that they believed “ the end of all things ” to be “ near, even at the doors. ” Their words, at any rate, were not belied by their actions, and do not suffer in comparison with anachronous fulminations respecting an impending conflagration of the material universe which exert no perceptible influence upon the transactions of business or the pursuits of daily life. Awakening as these alarming theories may have been to the Church of that primitive period when it was thought that even the term of natural life would be anticipated by the coming of the Lord, they appear now to have lost their power over strong minds, and to have only a tendency to cause weak and silly women to part with their possessions and goods, and to become hysterically expectant of an imaginary convulsion of all things. It is a matter of observation and experience that the Advent is no longer regarded with the “ earnest expectation ” manifested by the Apostles. To them it was an intense reality : to us, it is practically, an indifferent, if not a questionable event. To them it was a consideration paramount to that of death itself ; to us (if we may give credit to churchyard epitaphs) death is the coming of the Lord, an idea the furthest possible from that of the writers of the New Testament. The prepossessions, ⁵ more-

¹ Matt. x. 22.

² 1 Cor. i. 8.

³ 2 Cor. i. 13.

⁴ Heb. iii. 6, 14.

⁵ Not to speak of the misleading tendency of the headings of chapters, we may call attention to the paragraphs inserted at verse 36 of Matt. xxiv., and at verse 32 of Mark xiii., implying that the latter portion of these chapters is occupied with a different subject from the former, and conveying the idea that Jesus had been previously speaking of the de-

over, in favour of traditional theories which crop out in our English version, show that the translators were under the influence of a foregone conclusion, and that a difficulty had been experienced with regard to the proximity expressed in the Scriptures, which it was desirable, if possible, to overcome. It is true that the coming being either directly or indirectly alluded to in almost every page of the New Testament, the speediness of the event is not always insisted upon, just as Alison does not upon every occasion mention the exact period of the French Revolution, or Macaulay describe the geographical position of England with every notice of this country. Hence texts are to be found which speak of the Advent without further qualification, and at last to avoid a needless repetition, it simply came to be called "that day"¹—that well-known day which needed no further

struction of Jerusalem, but that at the part thus indicated a transition is made from the original subject to that of the end of this present world. We may notice also the absence in the English version of the force of the conjunction δὲ in Matt. xxiv. 29 ; xxv. 31, which connects the signs of the Advent with the preceding subject, and makes it impossible to believe that the author could have intended to place an interval of 1800 years or more between the two predictions. We may add to this the separation of Mark ix. 1 from its legitimate context at the conclusion of chapter viii., with a view perhaps of applying to the Transfiguration a passage descriptive of the Second Advent of Christ ; and the omission of the sense of proximity expressed in the verb μέλλω, so constantly employed to denote the speediness of the coming.

¹ The New Testament insists much upon the developments of a day approximately future when Jesus should be revealed in his true character of Messiah. Even in the Sermon upon the Mount, a discourse supposed, but erroneously, to be devoid of Messianic conceptions, the punishment of the wicked as well as the reward of the righteous, is deferred to a great day of assize in which Messiah will sit upon the throne of judgment. It is of the condemnation of the former at that time that it is said, "Many will say unto me *in that day*, "Lord, Lord, etc." (Matt. vii. 22 ; xxiv. 36 ; 2 Tim. i. 12, 18 ; iv. 8). It is of the blessedness of the latter at the same period that it is also affirmed, "Rejoice ye *in that day*, and leap for joy : for behold your reward is great in heaven" (Luke vi. 23)—that well-known day which needed no further definition as the Advent itself was familiarly expressed by the terms, "He that is soon about to come"—τοῦ μέλλοντος—(Rom. v. 14), "The coming one"—ὁ ἐρχόμενος (Heb. x. 37), without

definition. Sufficient indications however of its proximity are interspersed throughout the writings of the New Testament to satisfy honest and unprejudiced inquiry, and to establish the fact that the Church of the Apostolic period entertained the expectation of an immediately impending catastrophe.

2. The promulgation, moreover, of the Gospel within an almost incredibly short period amongst the kingdoms of the then known world, is a proof not only that an urgent necessity existed for its rapid proclamation but that it was attended by revelations of a startling character: and it is perhaps as much to the alarm created by its extraordinary disclosures as to the enthusiasm of its first preachers, that the success of Christianity during the first century is to be attributed. Mr. Layard relates that he has known the whole population of a Mussulman village moved to fasting and repentance by the preaching of a Dervish foretelling a coming plague. What then must have been the effect of such an appalling doctrine as that of an immediate consummation of all things among a people credulous enough to believe that it was actually impending? It might be more easy to imagine than to describe the consternation likely to be produced, especially in an ignorant and superstitious age, by an unqualified acceptance of the words, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the

further comment. It is elsewhere called "The day of God" (2 Pet. iii. 12): "The day of Christ" (2 Thess. ii. 2; Phil. i. 6, 10; ii. 16): "The day of the Lord" (1 Thess. v. 2; 1 Cor. i. 8, v. 5; 2 Cor. i. 14; 2 Pet. iii. 10): "The day of visitation" (1 Pet. ii. 12): "The day of wrath" (Rom. ii. 5; Rev. vi. 17): "The day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2): "The day of redemption" (Ephes. iv. 30): "The day of judgment" (Matt. x. 15; xi. 22-24; xii. 36; 2 Pet. ii. 9; iii. 7; 1 John iv. 17: Acts xvii. 31; Rom. ii. 16): "The great day" (Jude 6): "The evil day" (Ephes. vi. 13): "The day" (1 Cor. iii. 13): "The day approaching" (Heb. x. 25): "The day at hand" (Rom. xiii. 12).

presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day"¹—announcing not only the immediate and terrible Advent of Messiah, but holding out the promise of exemption from these calamities to those who should give credence to the Apostolic message. It is probable that teaching of such an alarming character would be attended, as was actually the case, with immense effect: the announcement of an approaching end of the world having seriously affected² the minds of men, at subsequent and less critical periods of this world's history.

¹ 2 Thess. i. 7-10.

² It is worthy of remark that the delusion which may be traced, if not to Christ himself yet certainly to his disciples, that the world was coming rapidly to an end, has again and again repeated itself in the history of Christianity, and each time with due allowance for the varying circumstances of different ages, much in the same form. "It was the universal belief of the middle ages (says Michelet in his 'History of France') that the thousandth year from the Nativity would be the end of the world" a belief which induced universal terror, and a disposition to surrender property for the good of the soul. The Abbot Joachim, at the close of the twelfth century, predicted that the final consummation would take place in the year 1260, his vaticinations giving rise to the two mendicant orders of the Dominicans and the Franciscans; the epoch, however, having passed without witnessing a fulfilment, the 1,335 days of Dan. xii. 12, were next taken, and the year 1335 fixed upon as the date of the destruction of Antichrist. In the sixteenth century there arose among the Lutherans a sect headed by Nicholas Storck and Thomas Munzer, announcing a consummation in five, six, or seven years, which led to a bloody war, quenched only in the destruction at last of Munzer and his associates. Bengel, it is said, calculated that the millennium would begin in 1836, while Joseph Woolf assigned 1848 as the true period. If the predictions of modern prophets seem to be losing somewhat of their authority, it is not perhaps so much from want of credulity on the part of the multitudes, as because their assertions have been so often and so glaringly refuted. It was hardly to be expected that so fertile a season as the present for the exhibition of prophetic science should pass without some recognition of its opportunities, and the Eastern Question has opened a wide field for speculation. But whatever shape these visions may assume, a sanction is given to their anticipations by the Church itself. So long as she embodies in her Creeds and Formularies a vague

IV. *Texts which speak of the days of the Apostles as the last days.*

1. It is remarkable that the writers of the New Testament not only spoke of their own times as the last times, but defined them still more clearly as "*these last times*," or "*these last days*"—the period thus carefully designated necessarily preceding the time of "the end," or the last of the last days. Hence the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews declares that God, who in many portions and in many ways "spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath *in these last days* spoken unto us by the Son,"¹ where the days of Christ's public ministry and those which immediately followed are called "*these last days*." The period of our Lord's manifestation upon earth is described² in almost similar terms: "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested *in these last times* for you." So with reference to the punishment of the unrighteous Jews at the Advent of Messiah, it is declared of the unscrupulous accumulators of wealth *in (ἐν) the last days*, "Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall eat your flesh as it were fire;"³ whilst, on the other hand, it is affirmed of the holy elect of the same period that they are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed *in the last time*."⁴ With equal determination of the period expressed by "the last days," St. Paul informs Timothy that "*in the last days* perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves," etc., from such he is exhorted to "turn away;"⁵ this command implying that the last days in which these monstrous forms of iniquity should be manifested were those in which Timothy was himself living. So in the second Petrine epistle it is affirmed, "There shall come *in the last days* scoffers walking after their own lusts and and unfounded hope of an expected Advent, so long does she open a wide door for wild and extravagant delusions.

¹ Heb. i. 1, 2.

² 1 Pet. i. 20.

³ Jas. v. 3.

⁴ 1 Pet. i. 5.

⁵ 2 Tim. iii. 1-5.

saying, Where is the promise of his Coming?"—the writer evidently speaking of his own as the last days; and St. Jude points out the "mockers *in the last time*" as easily distinguishable from Christians of his own age by their separation from the Church, and by their sensuality and lack of the Spirit. To this may be added the testimony afforded by the first Epistle of St. John, the writer of which plainly considered his own times as the last times: "Little children *it is the last time* (hour): and as ye have heard that (the) Antichrist shall come, even so *now* are there many Antichrists, whereby we know that *it is the last time*." ¹

It is conceived that the texts now adduced establish the position that the Apostles considered their own days as "*the last days*," and that these were not the last days of the Jewish dispensation only, however circumstances might seem to favour such a supposition, may be inferred from the mention of them in writings (such as the second Petrine Epistle and the first Epistle of John) allowed to be posterior to the overthrow of the Jewish city and polity. Altogether, it would seem more probable that they are the last days of that "present evil age," ² as contrasted with "the ages to come;" ³ the end of the "things present," ⁴ which were shortly to be followed by the "things (*soon*) to come;" ⁵ the last days of the then existing age, during which Timothy was directed to "charge the rich in this world," ⁶ to treasure up "a good foundation for the time (*soon*) to come," ⁷ where the present age is evidently contrasted with the approaching age of the Messiah.⁸ The phrase, then, "*the last days*," significant as it is of an approaching consummation, would seem to be consistent in the lips of those who expected the end of all things within the term of their own natural life, and falls in harmoniously with other anticipations of the period. If employed of a later age

¹ 1 John ii. 18.

² ἐνεστώτος αἰῶνος πονηροῦ, Gal. i. 4.

³ τοῖς αἰῶσι τοῖς ἐπέρχομένοις, Eph. ii. 7.

⁴ ἐνεστώτα.

⁵ μέλλοντα, Rom. viii. 38.

⁶ ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι.

⁷ εἰς τὸ μέλλον.

⁸ 1 Tim. vi. 17, 19.

than that of the Apostles themselves, the circumstance may be attributed to an intense desire of finding an accomplishment for the predictions of Christ ; each succeeding generation fondly supposing their own to be the last days, and destined to witness a fulfilment denied to that which had preceded.

2. The exhortation to patience perceptible in the writings of the New Testament, implying that a suspicion had arisen which it was necessary to remove that the time appointed for the Advent was passing away without fulfilment, tends to give weight to the position that the Apostles considered their own as the last days. Not to mention the distress which had filled the minds of the Thessalonian converts respecting "them which were asleep," who had died in the interval between the promise and the expected Advent, which the Apostle endeavours to assuage by the assurance that the survivors "who should be alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord" should not take precedence of the departed saints, for "the dead in Christ should rise first;" we may observe that a general uneasiness appears to have prevailed respecting the tardy fulfilment of Messianic hopes. Hence the frequent exhortations to patience, coupled with the assurance that, although the event was delayed, it was nevertheless sure of accomplishment. Hence, too, believers are exhorted to "*wait* for (God's) Son from heaven,"¹ and the prayer is offered on their behalf, "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into *the patient waiting* for Christ"²—the attitude denoting not the unconscious insensibility of persons who had been long dead, but the active expectation of living men. Hence St. John describes himself as being "*in the kingdom and patience* of Jesus Christ,"³ and St. James adds, "*Be patient*,"⁴ therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.

¹ 1 Thess. i. 10.

² 2 Thess. iii. 5.

³ Rev. i. 9.

⁴ Writing to the twelve tribes, St. James had said in the passage immediately preceding, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl, for your miseries that shall come (*that are coming*) upon you : Ye have heaped treasure together for (*in*) the last days : Ye have condemned and killed the Just, and he doth not resist you." If the "ye" who condemned and

Be ye also patient, stablish your hearts ; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." These passages, and more might be added, prove that at an early period suspicions had arisen respecting the non-arrival of the promised Advent, and that it had become necessary to inculcate the duty of further patience—a position only intelligible on the supposition of the event taking place within a briefly extended term. The writer of the second Petrine epistle apologises for this delay in terms which show that the time for the expected Advent had already expired.¹ "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."² As time, however, advanced without bringing the desired accomplishment, these doubts, as was extremely natural, ripened into positive denial, and the scoffers of the last days are represented as saying, "Where is the promise of his coming; for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation?"—a taunt repeated in the Epistle of Jude, and which also finds expression in an Apocalyptic writing of an early period: "Afterwards, upon the subject of the Second Advent his disciples shall forsake

killed the Just are the Jews who had slain their Messiah, why are the "ye" who were to be patient to the coming of the Lord transformed into Christians of our times? If the "miserics" which were coming upon them refer to the troubles about to come on the Jewish people, why should the patience recommended to Jewish Christians of that age be thought to be addressed to Christians of the nineteenth century?

¹ To rely on this text with a view of counteracting the uniform testimony of the New Testament to the contrary, is a subterfuge of the most miserable kind. Independently of reasons which are given (p. 366) for doubting the genuineness of the second Petrine epistle, the text itself is simply a quotation from Psalm xc., to the effect that a thousand years are as nothing compared with the eternity of God. The same idea is reproduced in Eccclus. xviii. 10, "As a drop of water unto the sea, and a grave-stone in comparison of the sand: so are a thousand years to the days of eternity."

² 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9.

the doctrine of the twelve Apostles, their beloved and pure faith : while much contention shall take place respecting his Coming, and the proximity of his approach.”¹

It is conceived that the proofs which have been adduced in support of our position are so conclusive as to make it morally certain that the Second Advent of Christ was expected within a period whose definite character an honest criticism is bound to respect. It is not only that texts, neither few nor obscure, asseverated with the deepest solemnity and under circumstances of peculiar interest, confine that event within the limits of the then existing generation ; nor that the writers of the New Testament (the author of the fourth Gospel alone excepted) assert, or imply with one voice, the speediness of the Coming ; neither is it that the end of the world is represented as imminent in the Apostles’ days ; nor yet again that their times are said to be the last times—but it is all of these combined which constitute a chain of proof not quickly broken, the analogy of faith flowing uniformly in one direction, and never for a moment deviating from its wonted channel, And when to this is added the pictorial delineation of the Advent itself recorded in the Apocalypse, it would seem impossible to avoid the conclusion that the Scriptures of the New Testament point beyond all reasonable doubt to the expectation of a grand catastrophe, whose sudden and speedy approach was the devout expectation as well as constant and unvarying theme of the Church of the Apostolic period.

3. But is there nothing to be said on the other side ? We answer confidently, Nothing ; at any rate, nothing that cannot be satisfactorily accounted for. There is a faint leaning, on the part of Luke, on the side of delay,² which may be

¹ *Ascen. Isai. Vat. iii. 21, 22.*

² That the date of the third Gospel is posterior to the destruction of Jerusalem, and consequently later than those of Matthew and Mark, may be inferred from a comparison of the eschatology of the latter with that of the two preceding Gospels. It is noticeable that Luke omits the pre-

gathered from the qualification or omission of the urgent phrases employed by Matthew and Mark, and there is an almost total silence on that of the writer of the Fourth Gospel. These peculiarities, however, are easy of explanation when the late date of the respective writings is considered. Other and less formidable objections melt into thin air at the touch of patient and candid criticism. It is in vain that we shall be told that the Coming to destroy Jerusalem is typical of a more glorious Coming at the end of the world. The New Testament speaks only of two Advents: the first in the flesh, as man; the second, in the glory of the Father with all the holy angels. No such idea is mooted as a third Coming. It is said indeed "He shall appear *the second time*

diction recorded by Matthew and Mark of the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place, for he knew that no pagan idol had been set up in the temple at the time of the capture of Jerusalem by the Romans; but, on the other hand, he relates, what the others have not, the surrounding of the city by the Roman armies, alluding probably to the wall of circumvallation which he had witnessed during the siege. He further mentions, what he could not have known except from supernatural guidance—a gift to which he expressly lays no claim, that an immense number of Jews should fall by the sword, that others should be led away captive unto all nations, and that Jerusalem should be trodden down (not for the three years and an half of the Apocalypse) but for the longer period of the times of the Gentiles. With remarkable variation from the preceding Gospels he fails directly to connect the Coming of Christ with the destruction of Jerusalem, omits the "*immediately*" of Matthew, and the "*in those days*" of Mark, and leaves it to be inferred that a longer or shorter time might intervene between the destruction of the city and the Coming of the Son of Man, although he comprises both events within the limits of the then-existing generation. So in answer to the interrogation of the High Priest to Jesus respecting his Messiah-ship, "Art thou the Christ, tell us?" he omits the coming in the clouds of heaven, recorded by Matthew and Mark. Similarly in answer to the question of the Pharisees, "When the kingdom of God should come," Jesus is made to say that its approach should not be attended by the outward signs which according to the two preceding Gospels were expected to accompany its arrival, for the writer knew that these had not taken place; the kingdom cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, lo here or lo there, for the kingdom of God is within you (Luke xvii. 20, 21). Cf. Acts i. 1-11, where the immediate character of the Advent is not asserted

without sin unto salvation,"¹ but it is nowhere said He shall appear the third time. Besides, if the Coming is to be repeated, then must the premonitory signs be repeated also; Jerusalem must again be compassed with armies; they which are in Judea must once more flee to the mountains, and the disciples must renew their mission to the cities of Israel. However events may repeat themselves in the history of the world, it is plain that judgments predicated of particular cities and nations cannot, with fairness, be said to be typical of other judgments with which they may chance to coincide, *still less of judgments of a different kind*. In order for one event to be typical of another, it is necessary that they should agree in general outline as well as in minute particulars; and to admit a second application of prophecy where a partial resemblance is alone attainable, not only savours of arbitrary selection, but makes it uncertain to which of the two events the prophecy originally referred.

Neither can we accept the theory proposed by an eminent divine,² that in the celebrated eschatological prophecy³ "two distinct sets of predictions run together in artless parallel," and that while "a period for the fulfilment of the first series, the human judgment, is fixed within the lifetime of a generation, we, on the contrary, are told of the last judgment, 'Of that hour knoweth no man, neither the angels, nor the Son, but the Father.'" To this it may be answered that the disciples do not ask for the signs of two independent transactions, but for the sign of two parts of the same transaction; and that even if it could be shown that there is a distinction between "the human judgment" and "the last judgment" it is impossible to discover a period of fulfilment for the one remote from that assigned to the other. To this it may be added that it is highly improbable that two distinct sets of predictions would have been thus mixed up in inextricable

¹ Heb. ix. 28.

² The author's lamented friend and patron, Dr. Rowland Williams.

³ Matt. xxiv., Mark xiii., Luke xxi.

confusion, thereby misleading the disciples, as well as the Church of future times, on a point on which, above all others, a strict explicitness was required. Neither shall we be appalled by the argument from antiquity, as it is called, fortifying its opinions grey with the consentient acceptance of eighteen centuries by the anathemas of ecclesiastical terrorism; for we know that the voice of Jesus himself is before the symbols of the Church, and that if the above-mentioned argument were in every case conclusive, then would the Mosaic law be above the religion of Jesus, and Protestantism itself little better than a criminal schism. Neither, again, can we any longer entertain the view that the Advent of Christ is a past event which had its accomplishment at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. We may ask in vain for any proof of the personal manifestation of Christ at the time of the destruction of the holy city, or of the fulfilment of the stupendous events which were to accompany the Advent, such as the resurrection of the dead, the rapture of the living, the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, the myriad host of attendant angels, the sound of the trumpet of the Archangel, the convulsions of the material world, and the universal judgment. Add to this, that the Coming of the Son of Man is represented as a terrific consummation with which the whole world is concerned, and to give timely notice of which event the Gospel should be preached "as a witness unto all nations" before the end should come; a proclamation hardly needed in the case of a local calamity, and irrelevant when addressed to Gentile converts in no way concerned with the destruction of a Jewish city.

Nor can we be led away from the point at issue by a theory of perfection which, dwelling exclusively on the immense superiority of Christ's moral and intellectual character, infers the impossibility of mistake in a person of such high pretensions and such gifted powers. Our investigation is not concerned with the colouring which pious imagination may throw around the form of Jesus, but with the stern bare documents

which predicate of Christ Messianic qualities which experience has found to be untrue. Neither, again, can we suffer ourselves to be influenced by the consideration that our repudiation of the common theory of a day of judgment at the period of Christ's appearing has a tendency to impair belief in a future retribution. On the contrary, it seems to us more reasonable to suppose that the work of judgment, accomplishing itself even now upon ourselves, affords more reliable assurance of a righteous sentence hereafter than the vague expectation of an uncertain Advent. To the objection that St. Paul seems to have thought that his own death might take place before the Advent,¹ it may be answered that such an expectation, even if it were entertained by him, is not inconsistent with the idea of the Lord's speedy coming, for in the same Epistle he adds, "The Lord is at hand:"² while to the specious argument so confidently adduced to counteract the uniform teaching of the New Testament on this subject, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day,"³ it may be replied that Eusebius rejected the second Epistle ascribed to Peter from the Canon, that it gives internal signs of a late date as there was no room to scoff until the promise had failed of its fulfilment, and that the Christians therein addressed are exhorted to look for the Advent not as for something which should happen at some distant period, but during their own lifetime.

To the arguments already advanced it may be added that it is impossible to regard the expectation of an immediate end of all things as a slight and excusable mistake which ought not to impair our confidence in Apostolic teaching.

¹ Phil. i. 23.

² Phil. iv. 5.

³ 2 Pct. iii. 8. "Of the writings named as Peter's I know only one Epistle genuine" (Eus., *Hist. Ecc.*, iii. 3). It is fabricated (says M. Renan) from the first of Peter and the Epistle of Jude. That the writer should be acquainted with the legend respecting Peter (i. 14) is very suspicious.

It is a mistake of such importance, involving such tremendous issues, as to throw discredit upon Christianity itself, or at any rate upon that form of it embodied in popular theology. "Christianity (it has been well said) as now understood by the light of its subsequent history, must be intended to make its way in the world very gradually, and to effect its destined purpose only after the lapse of ages of indefinite duration. Its first promulgators, then, in believing as they did, that it would almost immediately finish its course and accomplish its object, showed that they were entirely ignorant of its scope and destiny, and to suppose that such were really the appointed ministers of heaven for communicating to mankind a Divine Revelation, is to suppose that God employed as instruments men who themselves needed instruction on that very subject which they were sent to teach."

V. Texts whose scope is limited by a period of the Second Advent.

The misapprehension which pervades the whole of the New Testament respecting the immediate coming of Christ in his kingdom necessarily extends to the doctrines connected with that event; to prolong, therefore, their application beyond the limits by which their influence is bounded involves them in an anachronism which distorts their primary and legitimate meaning. Theological propositions, perfectly consistent in the lips of those to whom the Second Advent was an impending reality, are simply anachronous and therefore irrelevant, after the period of their due accomplishment has passed away; their application to future times being frustrated by the falsification of the event around which as a centre they cling. Thus for instance, the Corinthians are bid to "judge nothing before the time (against Paul) *until the Lord come*,"¹ a passage which can only be fairly interpreted of an injunction to defer their own judgment to that of the Lord, whose Advent was close at hand. So again, the same

¹ 1 Cor. iv. 5.

Corinthians are exhorted to abide "in the same calling wherein they were called," whether slaves or freemen, married or unmarried, for "*the time was short*" (in which to make any change in their condition) "and the fashion (*σχημα*) of this world was passing away."¹ Other texts again define the period of the Advent within limits which it is impossible for sophistry to evade or for equivocation to defer. The evangelisation of the cities of Israel is to be *interrupted* by the coming of the Son of Man.² Timothy is charged to keep the commandment, without spot, unrebukable, "*until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ*,"³ a charge which supposes that the Advent would take place during the term of his natural life. The hint is thrown out respecting John, that he might tarry *till He came*, suggesting that the Son of Man would be revealed before the career of the beloved apostle came to a close.⁴ The good work begun in the Philippian converts is to be performed "*till the day of Christ*," and prayer is made for them that they may continue sincere and without offence "*till the day of Christ*,"⁵ texts which are only intelligible upon the supposition that the coming of the Lord would take place during the lifetime of the persons addressed.⁶ To these may be added other texts which are so limited by the Advent that they must be interpreted in connection with that event. The day of the Lord which should come "*as a thief*" during the lifetime of some then living (and it is evident that it could not come suddenly upon them if they were dead) was to be attended by the rapture⁷ in

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 20-31.

² Matt. x. 23.

³ 1 Tim. vi. 14.

⁴ John xxi. 23.

⁵ Phil. i. 6, 10.

⁶ 1 Cor. iv. 5.

⁷ The doctrine of the Resurrection, as set forth in the writings of St. Paul, comprehended those who lived on unto Christ's second coming and those who had died before that event: the bodies of the former were to attain a condition requisite for the new life in the kingdom of Christ without the intervention of death; those of the latter were at the same time to be re-awakened and changed. All, indeed, should not sleep, for some should be quick upon earth at the Lord's coming, but all, the living and the dead, should experience a change, for "flesh and blood (our present mortal bodies) cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth cor-

clouds of those who should be "alive and remain," *amongst whom Paul thought that he and his fellow-Christians might be included.*¹ To this may be added the anxiety respecting the salvation of those Christians who had died before the Second Advent had taken place, an anxiety expressed in the words, "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished,"² and which implies *the proximity of the expected Advent.* The judgment to be executed upon "the quick and the dead" at Christ's appearing and kingdom comprises a sentence to be passed on those then living (the quick) *who continued to live on until the Advent*, as well as upon those who had died before that solemn event.³ The mediation of Jesus, who had entered Heaven, then to appear in the presence of God in behalf of the Church of that period, is circumscribed by the return, when He should "*appear the second time without sin unto salvation*"⁴—an appearing which the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews expected *within the briefest conceivable period.*⁵ The righteousness of God, which is, through faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe, is a justification earned for the Church of that age as their ground of merit *in the approaching day of the Lord*, when those who had been justified by his blood should be "saved from (the) wrath through him"⁶—"even Jesus who delivereth⁷ us from the wrath to come;"⁸ the faith de-
ruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor. xv. 50-54). With the descent of the Lord from heaven, the dead in Christ rise before those "who are alive and remain" receive their summons to meet Him; a precedence in the order of the resurrection being given to those faithful ones who had already died over those who should be changed while yet alive in the flesh (1 Thess. iv. 13-18). But whether under the form of *allage*, change, or of *anastasis*, standing up, the Resurrection is synchronical with the time of the Judgment and the Second Advent. These three events take place at the same time in the New Testament, and the non-fulfilment of one of them within the appointed term sensibly affects the consideration to be given to the rest.

¹ 1 Thess. iv. 15-17.² 1 Cor. xv. 18.³ Acts x. 42; Rom. xiv. 9; 1 Pet. iv. 5; 2 Tim. iv. 1.⁴ Heb. ix. 24-28.⁵ Heb. x. 37.⁶ Rom. v. 9.⁷ τὸν ῥυόμενον.⁸ 1 Thess. i. 10.

manded being *faith in Jesus as the Messiah*, who was able to save to the uttermost in the great and terrible day of the Lord.¹ The Atonement is a satisfaction made unto God by the death of his Son "*in the end of the world*,"² in behalf of the Church of that time; the advantages accruing to the believer from this sacrificial act *not extending beyond the time of the Advent*, when "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall (*soon*) devour the adversaries."³ The Gospel of the kingdom is to be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations *before the end shall come*,⁴ a message which was delivered (in St. Paul's day) "to every creature which is under heaven."⁵ The duty of repentance without delay is enjoined on the ground of the approaching judgment to be executed *at the appearing and kingdom of Jesus Christ*;⁶ or as the necessity for haste is elsewhere indicated, God "*now* commandeth all men everywhere to repent because he hath appointed a day in which he will (*soon*) judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained"⁷—a day whose imminence was thought to be assured by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Salvation is not so much a deliverance from moral guilt as *from "the wrath (soon) to come"*⁸ *at the approaching Advent*, "when the Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ";⁹ a salvation "*nearcr*" when Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans than when he first believed in Christ,¹⁰ and "*ready to be revealed in the last time*."¹¹ The ordinances of the Mosaic law are imposed "*until the time of reformation*,"¹² a term equivalent to "*the regeneration* when the Son of Man shall

¹ Acts ii. 21; Rom. x. 13.² Heb. ix. 26.³ Heb. x. 26, 27.⁴ Matt. xxiv. 14.⁵ Col. i. 23.⁶ 2 Tim. iv. 1.⁷ Acts xvii. 30, 31.⁸ Matt. iii. 7.⁹ 2 Thess. i. 7, 8.¹⁰ Rom. xiii. 11.¹¹ 1 Pet. i. 5.¹² Heb. ix. 10.

sit on the throne of his glory ;”¹ for, “ *Till heaven and earth pass*, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”² The miraculous gifts of the Spirit last only “ *unto the day of redemption*,”³ a season contemporaneous with that of the Advent itself⁴—a statement involving one or other of two dilemmas, either that the period unto which these gifts should continue has not arrived, in which case they ought to be still present,⁵ or, at any rate, in abeyance in the Church, or that it has passed away without a fulfilment, since we no longer have the gifts. The session of Christ at the right hand of God (for the heavens must receive Him “ *until the times of restitution of all things*,”⁶ lasts unto the period of his coming, called “THE END,” when “The Son himself shall be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”⁷

The position we have occupied will appear yet more unassailable when the doctrinal confusion caused by the postponement of the Advent beyond the period appointed in Scripture for its development is taken into account. Of the theological differences caused by this anachronous postponement it may be said that their name is Legion, each equally false and equally at variance with one another. The disputes of divines respecting the doctrine of Election might have been

¹ Matt. xix. 28.

² Matt. v. 18.

³ Eph. iv. 30 ; i. 14 ; 2 Cor. i. 22.

⁴ Luke xxi. 28.

⁵ The followers of Edward Irving having rightly concluded from Scripture that certain gifts of healing, tongues, prophecy, etc., were to be exercised by Christians until the time of the Second Coming, have been naturally led to expect a continuance of these miraculous powers, and, according to traditional theories which represent the Advent as yet future, are consistent in saying that they ought to have the gifts. Yes, they ought to have them, but where are they? Show us but one miracle and it sufficeth us. This futile attempt to revive extraordinary powers which were only of a dispensational character, demonstrates that the period by which they were said to be bounded cannot be extended beyond its proper limits ; the separation of these gifts into ordinary and extraordinary being merely a theological invention unknown to Scripture.

⁶ Acts iii. 21.

⁷ 1 Cor. xv. 24-28.

less bitter, had it been understood that this doctrine, as revealed in the New Testament, is concerned with the salvation of a chosen few out of the world¹ who should be delivered from the wrath to come *at the approaching advent of Messiah*. The invidious theory of Predestination might have attained less notoriety, had it been understood that the "vessels of wrath" and the "vessels of mercy" spoken of by St. Paul, comprehended those only whose destruction or redemption was then "*drawing nigh*."²

The presumptuous notion of Effectual Calling and Final Perseverance³ might have been attended with less mischievous consequences, had it been seen that the grace, or favour, unto which Christians were called was being brought⁴ unto them "*at the revelation (apocalypse) of Jesus Christ*,"⁵ and that the perseverance of the saints was to continue until a consummating period called "*the end*," then supposed to be imminent. The declamations fulminated from many a pulpit against the world and the things of the world which are not unfrequently represented as injurious, might have been thought superfluous, had it been perceived that "*this present evil world*" out of which Jesus should take his⁶ people,⁷ is not identical with that in which we are now living, but is that expiring course (or age) of the world which was⁸ about to pass away and to be immediately followed by the world (*soon*) to come—the age of the Messiah. The sins laid to the charge of the Prince of this world, that most convenient scapegoat of recalcitrant humanity, might have been fewer, had the reflection suggested itself that Satan was supposed to be *the god of the world that then was*, but that his powers of temptation would be crippled, and himself bound, in the coming age. The failure which has hitherto attended Missionary efforts might have been less keenly felt, had not the fact been overlooked that *the Gospel*

¹ 2 Tim. ii. 10.

² See Westminster Confession of Faith.

³ 1 Pet. i. 13.

⁷ Gal. i. 4.

² Luke xxi. 28.

⁴ φερομένην.

⁶ ἐξέλθαι.

⁸ 1 Cor. vii. 31.

had been preached in the apostles' days in all the world for a witness unto all nations,¹ and that the message now delivered unto the heathen is destitute of that Messianic element which characterised the teaching and ensured the success of Jesus and his apostles. The labours of the Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews might have been less active had it been understood that in Apostolic days there was "*a remnant according to the election of grace*"² who were "*being saved*"³ from that untoward generation."⁴ The attitude assumed by the priesthood might have been less presumptuous, had the text by which their claims are thought to be supported been interpreted upon just and critical principles; a very slight examination being sufficient to show that when the Great Master assured his disciples of his continual presence with them in their task of making known his Gospel "*all the (remaining) days, even unto the end of the age,*"⁵ He confined his remarks to those whom He addressed—"the Lord (it is said) working with them and confirming the word with signs following."⁶ The monstrous assumption of the power of the keys might have been less confidently asserted, had it been perceived that they are "the keys of the kingdom of Heaven," and that the commission of this authority to the Apostles did not confer upon the clergy of future ages the prerogative of binding and loosing in the ordinance of priestly absolution, but merely gave to the former the right to admit into or to exclude from the approaching kingdom of Messiah.⁷ The design of the Sacramental institution might have been more clearly apprehended, had the limitation enjoined by St. Paul, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye announce the Lord's death *till he come,*"⁸ received sufficient consideration; the object of this memorial of Christ's adieu being accomplished with the arrival of the time when "he

¹ Col. i. 23; Rom. x. 18.

² Rom. xi. 5.

³ τοὺς σωζομένους.

⁴ Acts ii. 40.

⁵ Matt. xxviii. 20.

⁶ Mark xvi. 17-20; 2 Cor. xii. 12; Heb. ii. 4.

⁷ Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 18; John xx. 23.

⁸ 1 Cor. xi. 26.

should drink it *now* with his disciples in his Father's kingdom." ¹

In these, and numerous other passages, the Advent is conceived to be a veritable "end of all things"—the consummation to which all the doctrines of Christianity point, and beyond which their application does not extend. Before the minds of the writers of the New Testament "a vast terminus looms out overpowering other objects. Their glances at the immediate past are brief; they do not dwell upon the present; but fix their gaze on the near future where a mighty phenomenon fills the sphere of their vision." It is difficult on any other supposition to account for the limitation which pervades their statements, or for the necessity which existed for the rapid promulgation of the Gospel within a given period. If in our day the Gospel of the Church has usurped the place of the Gospel of the Kingdom, and we have cast our expectations into a form different from that assumed by its first preachers, it is not the less true that the older and more literal doctrines which we have repudiated represent the real teaching of Jesus and his apostles.

This point receives confirmation from the circumstance that, with the exception of a few directions in the Pastoral Epistles, the genuineness of which has been deservedly questioned, no provision seems to have been made for its future guidance and support. No creeds emanate from the apostles, no liturgies, no canons. No cathedrals rise, no permanent institutions are founded, nothing is done that exhibits a desire to establish an universal Church, or betrays the hope of a long and uninterrupted ecclesiastical rule. The manner in which the Gospel was first preached indicates, on the contrary, urgent haste. A pressing necessity exists for proclaiming a message of tremendous import within a limited period. The region once traversed by the beautiful feet of those who preach the gospel of peace may not, except under peculiar circumstances, be traversed again. Like the Master

¹ Mark xiv. 25.

who said, "I must preach to other cities also, for therefore am I sent," so the apostle, having declared at Corinth the counsel of God, desires to be "enlarged by them according to his rule (showing that it was his usual practice) abundantly to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond them."¹ The Gospel moreover, was preached before it was written, and even after the composition of the evangelical histories, a preference (according to Papias) was for some time given to oral instruction. "How," said the apostle, "should they invoke one whom they did not believe? but how believe in one of whom they had not heard, and how hear without a preacher, and how preach except they be sent?"² It did not occur to him to ask how they should believe in one of whom they had not *read*; the expectation of an approaching end of all things rendering all teaching, except oral teaching, unnecessary. To this it may be added, that Jesus neither himself committed to writing, nor took any means to preserve his genuine teachings in that form, so as to avoid the errors of memory on the part of those who have handed them down to us, and the corruptions of time and oral tradition. The more this fact is considered, the more inexplicable it will appear on any other ground than this, that neither He nor his apostles saw any necessity for so doing, because they believed that the world was coming to an end in their own time. It is difficult, moreover, on any other supposition than that of the expectation of an immediate end of all things which superseded the necessity of written documents, to account for the late date of composition attributed to the evangelical histories, or to explain why the publication of such important narratives should have been deferred to a period sufficiently distant from the events related, to detract from their credit. A glance at the divisions, not only of apostolic men but of theologians of the present day, not only shows the insufficiency of existing documents to ensure an unanimous verdict on matters of faith, but justifies the desire for an authentic original from which there

¹ 2 Cor. x. 16.² Rom. x. 14, 15.

could be no appeal. This, as we have seen, was not compatible with the peculiar circumstances under which the Gospel was made known to the world ; the interval between the proclamation of the approaching kingdom and its arrival being thought too brief to admit of more than a hurried and verbal message.

And uncharitableness, as well as confusion, is the necessary consequence of this prolongation of doctrines beyond their natural limits. The animosity so painfully exhibited by Christians towards each other, is traceable, not so much to diversity of opinion on moral questions, as on those of a purely doctrinal character ; each of the thousand and one sects into which Christendom is unhappily divided professing to draw its tenets and to derive its authority from the sacred source alone, and claiming the possession of truth to the exclusion of other religious communities. The failure of pious and thoughtful men to arrive at doctrinal agreement is hard to be reconciled with the fact that the Great Teacher desired, above all things, unity for his Church ; and can only be accounted for on the supposition that a serious mistake has been incorporated into primitive Christian teaching, which has prevented exegetical harmony, and which is reflected in the controversies which are agitating the world.

VI. *The Gospel of the kingdom preached by Jesus and his disciples.*

1. The Gospel preached by Jesus and his disciples, proclaimed, not the degeneracy of human nature and its remedy in Christ, but the good news of an approaching Messianic kingdom to be developed at the end of the age, then thought to be imminent. To make known the joyful tidings of this "kingdom of heaven"¹ was the great work of our Master

¹ The terms, "The kingdom of heaven," and "The kingdom of God," so frequently employed in the Synoptics, appear to take their origin from the kingdom to be set up by the God of Heaven (Dan. ii. 44), which was expected to succeed the Syrian kingdom of Antiochus Epiphanes. That

upon earth, and the key-note of his teaching, as well as of that of his disciples. The Gospel of Jesus, according to the Synoptics, is "the Gospel of the kingdom,"¹ "the word of the kingdom,"² elsewhere called "the Gospel of the kingdom of God,"³ "the glad tidings of the kingdom of God."⁴ The proclamation of the near approach of this kingdom formed the basis of the habitual discourses of Jesus, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the Gospel,⁵ and its elucidation formed the subject of many of his exquisite parables. "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say (as the Baptist had done before Him), Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."⁶ "As ye go (He said to his twelve apostles) preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."⁷ Into whatever city the seventy disciples, whom He is reported to have sent two and two before his face, should enter, they were bid first to say, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you,"⁸ whilst, of those who would not receive them nor hear their words, it is declared, "It shall be more tolerable *in that day* for Sodom than for that city," thereby connecting the period of its arrival with that of the last judgment. This was the kingdom for whose approach

these terms were used by Jesus in a literal sense seems probable from the habitual accommodation to his Messianic career of other ideas taken from the Book of Daniel with which He seems to have been thoroughly familiar. Amongst these may be mentioned his appropriation of the peculiar title, "Son of Man," in a sense different from that used by Ezekiel; the unique conception of a Coming in the clouds of heaven, which has its counterpart in Daniel vii. 13; the resurrection with which this Advent was to be attended, an idea which finds its original expression in that apocalyptic book; the accompanying judgment corresponding with "the judgment set and the books opened" of Daniel; the rise and subsequent destruction of an adversary of the Christian Church, which owes its foundation to the Antichrist of the pre-Christian period; and the direction given to readers of the Book of Daniel (Matt. xxiv. 15) to trace events in the circumstances of the Church of that period which should correspond with the predictions of that ancient prophet.

¹ Matt. iv. 23; ix. 35; xxiv. 14.

³ Mark i. 14.

⁶ Matt. iv. 17.

⁴ Luke viii. 1.

⁷ Matt. x. 7

² Matt. xiii. 19.

⁵ Luke xx. 1.

⁸ Luke x. 9-11.

the disciples were bid to pray, "Thy kingdom come," and until whose inauguration at the time of the Advent, they were to hold trust, "Occupy till I come."¹

The terms of proximity in which its speedy approach is indicated, whilst they assert its impending and all but present character in language which cannot be mistaken, preclude at the same time the supposition that the influence of moral qualities, such as goodness, meekness, purity, etc., could be described under the figure of a kingdom—these being simply the requisite preparations for participating in its glories when it should come suddenly upon them while they were yet alive upon earth. So far from being the kingdom itself, these moral qualifications were to be the harbingers of its approach, by the exercise of which the Church of that age was looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God,² and blotting out their sins by repentance and conversion in order that the times of refreshing *may* come from the presence of the Lord³—expressions which imply not only that the day was not far distant, but that its arrival might be speeded by active preparation. Surely that could not have been a purely spiritual kingdom in which the disciples were to "eat and drink, and to sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel,"⁴ in which "many should come from the east and west, and should sit down (*ad carnem*) with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,"⁵ to "eat bread in the kingdom of God."⁶ Surely that kingdom was not purely spiritual which included various degrees of official responsibility⁷ and about which the question of precedence was fiercely contested.⁸ That could not well have been only a reign of "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" apart from more real and literal developments, for which Joseph of Arimathea "waited ;"⁹ unto which Paul prayed that he might be "preserved ;"¹⁰ until whose appear-

¹ Luke xix. 13.² 2 Pet. iii. 12.³ Acts iii. 19.⁴ Matt. xix. 28 ; Luke xxii. 29, 30.⁵ Matt. viii. 11.⁶ Luke xiv. 15.⁷ Luke xix. 12-27.⁸ Matt. xviii. 1.⁹ Luke xxiii. 51.¹⁰ 2 Tim. iv. 18.

ing Timothy was to "keep the commandment without spot and unrebukable,"¹ and whose sudden coming during the lifetime of himself or his contemporaries was the plain and unequivocal doctrine of Paul.² Above all, that revelation in majesty tremendous which should inaugurate the kingdom—that unimaginable Advent of love and salvation, of wrath and fear—that glorious Apocalypse "at his appearing *and his kingdom*," accompanied with appalling natural phenomena, the darkened sun, the bloodshot moon, the falling stars, the roaring sea—attended with still more astounding celestial portents, the myriad hosts of heaven, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, the judgment of the quick and dead, the wailing of the lost, the gathering of the elect, the vivification of them that sleep, the rapture of those that are "alive and remain"—that inexpressibly awful "Coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory," for which all the disciples were bid to watch,³ and which some of their number should be alive upon earth to see,⁴—cannot be reconciled with the theory that the kingdom announced by Him who came "not to destroy but to fulfil" the Messianic hopes of his nation was simply spiritual,⁵ and

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 14.

² Not to encumber the text with quotations, see what the substance of his teaching was at Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, Ephesus, Miletus, and Rome (Acts *passim*).

³ Mark xiii. 37. ⁴ Matt. xvi. 28 : xxiv, 30; Mark ix. 1; Luke ix. 27.

⁵ From a dispassionate and non-controversial reading of the New Testament, it would appear morally certain that neither our Lord nor his disciples taught the doctrine of a purely spiritual, *i.e.*, moral and invisible kingdom. The promulgation of a theory so foreign to Jewish nations would scarcely have evangelized the world within the period appointed, and would have failed to create that enthusiastic anticipation of an approaching end of all things which appears to have been the universal belief of the Apostolic age. The conviction is therefore forced upon us that the expectation of that period was essentially Messianic, and that it was not until that magnificent hope had been frustrated by the course of events that the theory of a kingdom coming without observable pomp and show, was substituted by the Church of a later age for the "faith (in an approaching reign of unimaginable splendour) which was once delivered to the saints."

merely exhibited an inversion of the more literal conceptions of the ancient prophets.

Strange, then, as it may appear, it is, nevertheless, not more strange than true, that the message of salvation delivered in the present day throughout the churches of the land, a message whose sufficiency we extol, of whose purity we are the self-constituted judges, of whose full and unreserved proclamation we are jealous "with a godly jealousy,"—a message which we deem of such vital importance as to justify the transmission of it to the heathen, and for which we demand at once their prompt attention and their unqualified acceptance—is not that originally set forth by Jesus and his apostles. In utter unconsciousness of any so-called scheme of salvation, the first emissaries of Christianity affirmed Jesus to be the Messiah by virtue of his resurrection from the dead, offered forgiveness of sins upon repentance and faith to all that should accept Him as the Deliverer promised to the fathers, proclaimed the speedy advent of a day when the man set apart by God for that purpose should judge the world in righteousness, and announced the glad tidings of an approaching Messianic kingdom. This, and not the doctrine of the resurrection alone, which it is plain could not have been preached by the Baptist, Jesus, or by the twelve prior to the crucifixion, was the glorious Gospel of the blessed God which the Apostles proclaimed through flood and fire, for whose dear sake they were willing to give up their lives, and respecting whose pure and uncorrupted transmission Paul affirmed twice with characteristic energy, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be an *anathema*." ¹

2. To the objection that Jesus is reported to have said, "My kingdom is not of this world," ² it may be answered that the late date of the fourth Gospel, together with its silence on the subject of the last things, goes far to show that a spiritual view of the kingdom of heaven had taken the place of more

¹ Gal. i. 8, 9.

² John xviii. 36.

literal anticipations, and that the words in question could not have been spoken by Jesus, but convey, as is common in that Gospel, the theological views of the writer. Similarly the much disputed clause, "The kingdom of God is within you,"¹ may simply mean that the object of the expectation of the Pharisees was not so much a kingdom from without, as one whose foundation was already laid within and in the midst of them. To the further objection, that in a few texts, *e.g.* Matt. xii. 28, the kingdom of heaven is said to have commenced during the ministry of Jesus upon earth, or rather is represented as a gradual process which was growing up to more perfect development, it may be replied that it can only be said to have commenced in the sense of a preparation for the approaching Messianic reign, as the sealing of the Spirit was an earnest of inheritance "until the redemption of the purchased possession."² In the parable of the tares and the wheat, which inculcates patient waiting for the development of the kingdom of heaven, the children of the kingdom and the children of the wicked one, who are undistinguishably mixed together in this world, are separated at the time of the harvest; showing that although the kingdom may be said to have commenced on earth, it was not to be finally established till the end of the age, when "the righteous should shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."³ The same gradual progress is noticeable in the parables of the grain of mustard seed and the leaven;⁴ the kingdom, small at first, as the "stone cut without hands," afterwards becoming a great mountain and filling the earth.⁵

To this it may be added, that as no long interval was expected to take place between the proclamation of the Gospel of the kingdom and its arrival, it was conceived that those who had already pressed into it would be "alive and remain" unto the coming of the Lord—the intervention of death between the period of their Christian calling and their reward

¹ Luke xvii. 21.² Eph. i. 14.³ Matt. xiii. 43.⁴ Matt. xiii. 31, 33.⁵ Dan. ii. 35.

being a contingency not contemplated by "the heirs of the kingdom," who would simply experience a mysterious change, without which "flesh and blood could not inherit the kingdom of God."¹ Hence the Scriptures connect the judgment of the quick (those then alive upon earth) with "his appearing and his kingdom,"² and speak of the Son of Man coming "in his kingdom to reward every man according to his works" before some of those then living should have "tasted of death;"³ the kingdom being only "*nigh at hand*," when the disciples should see the signs of the Advent itself,⁴ thereby proving incontestably that it had not previously arrived. Although the qualifications for admission into it were virtues acquired upon earth, the season of final entrance is deferred to the time of the general judgment at the coming of the Son of Man. The Baptist connected its development with the grand assize of humanity, for it is surely not of the moral enlightenment of mankind, but of the final judgment, that the words are spoken, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire;" or that the warning is given to the Pharisees to "flee from the wrath (*soon*) to come."⁵ It is to a period subsequent to that solemn event that the condemnation points, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven," and the benediction refers, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;" that kingdom being represented as an "inheritance,"⁶ possession not⁷ then enjoyed but to be

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 50.

² 2 Tim. iv. 1.

³ Matt. xvi. 27, 28; Luke xxiii. 42.

⁴ Luke xxi. 31.

⁵ Matt. iii. 7, 12.

⁶ 1 Pet. i. 4.

⁷ Not to speak of the forty days after the resurrection during which He spake of "the things pertaining unto the kingdom of God," nor of the question then put to Him by the disciples, "Lord, wilt thou then at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts i. 3, 6), the petition, "Thy kingdom come," immediately followed by the clause "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven," not only shows that the kingdom had not then arrived, but that it was to be established upon earth.

enjoyed hereafter, a "heavenly kingdom,"¹ a "kingdom of glory,"² a kingdom which "flesh and blood could not inherit" (1 Cor. xv. 50), an "everlasting kingdom" (2 Pet. i. 11), and consequently not finally established during Christ's ministry upon earth. Hence Jesus connects his reception of the kingdom with the period of his return.³ Hence He declares that He will not drink of the fruit of the vine "until the kingdom of God shall come."⁴ Hence the disciples are taught to pray, "Thy kingdom come," as for something which had not then arrived; and the two ambitious disciples, James and John, request to sit, the one on the right hand and the other on the left hand of their Master, "in his kingdom"⁵—a kingdom, of course, then future. To this it may be added, that the terms "the kingdom of God," and "eternal life," are used interchangeably,⁶ and it is difficult to conceive that the latter phrase refers to a spiritual kingdom in the hearts of men.

The same idea of the kingdom of God as a kingdom shortly to be manifested at the appearing of Messiah, is common to the apostolical Fathers. Thus, Clement: "If we shall do what is just in the sight of God we shall enter into his kingdom, and shall receive the promises which neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man; wherefore let us every hour expect the kingdom of God in love and righteousness, because we know not the day of God's appearing."⁷ Similarly, Barnabas: "They (says Christ) that will see me and come to my kingdom, must through many afflictions and troubles attain unto me."⁸ "The Apostles," says Clement, "went forth to preach the good tidings that the kingdom of God was soon about to come,"⁹ and the judgment is called by the same writer, "The judgment of the kingdom of Christ." The author of the preface to the Apocalypse of the Second Esdras represents the kingdom as

¹ 2 Tim. iv. 18.² 1 Thess. ii. 12.³ Luke xix. 13.⁴ Luke xxii. 18.⁵ "In his glory," Mark x. 37.⁶ Matt. xix. 16-24; xxv. 34-46.⁷ 2 Epist. iv. 14, 15.⁸ Barnabas vi. 15.⁹ Epist. ad Cor. xix.

shortly to be manifested at the appearing of Jesus Christ : " Thus saith the Lord unto Esdras, Tell my people that I will give them the kingdom of Jerusalem, which I would have given unto Israel . . . pray for a few days unto you that that they may be shortened : the kingdom is already prepared for you: watch. . . . Look for your shepherd, he shall give you everlasting rest, for he is nigh at hand that shall come in the end of the world. Be ready to the reward of the kingdom, for the everlasting light shall shine upon you for evermore." ¹ Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian and others, also support, although with much extravagance, the notion of a mundane-celestial kingdom.

In following out the eschatology of the New Testament to its natural conclusion, we are supported by the conviction that we have pursued our investigation not only in accordance with the rules of careful criticism, but also with those of strict morality. There are subjects upon which simple minds are as capable of forming a correct opinion as more highly cultivated intellects. No amount of sophistry could induce a man possessed of common intelligence to believe that two and two make five, or that an event may be said to be near and far off at the same time ; and the question at issue, however its elucidation might be promoted by an acquaintance with the original language of the New Testament, demands little more than the exercise of a calm and unbiassed judgment to enable ordinary readers to arrive at a sound conclusion.¹

The cause of this most sad and hopeless confusion arises

¹ 2 Esdras ii. 10-35.

¹ "Jésus, dans les discours qui lui sont attribués, n'annonce pas seulement en général qu'il reviendra sur les nuées du ciel—un jour, dans deux mille ans peut-être ou dans cent mille ; il annonce, qu'il reviendra avant la mort des personnes présentes, qu'il reviendra *aussitôt* après que Jérusalem aura été profané. Si les mots qu'on place dans sa bouche ont un sens, ils ont ce sens là ; et s'ils ne l'ont pas c'est que pour les theologiens blanc signifie noir et que noir signifie blanc. Mais pour quiconque n'est pas un sophiste ce dilemme se pose catégoriquement : ou Jésus s'est trompé, ou ces discours ne sont pas de lui."—Colani : *Croyances Messianiques*, pp. 251-252.

from the circumstance that no fixed date, as in 2 Esdras vii. 28, or as in the Ascension of Isaiah iv. 14, being assigned in the Gospels for the re-appearing of the Son of Man, the Christians were enabled to slide gradually into a different acceptance of their Master's words, and thus to defer a catastrophe which had been the object of expectation to a particular generation, to their own—an error perpetuated to subsequent generations, and even to our own times. Doubtless there was a period in the history of the Church when men felt themselves justified in expecting the immediate Coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven ; but when that generation had passed away within the limits of which “the end of all things,”¹ was confined, further hope could only lead to disappointment. But whilst we have not shunned to express our conviction that a serious mistake went hand in hand with the promulgation of Christianity, we have also thought that misapprehension on this point confers no warrant for believing that, in a life so pure and self-sacrificing as that of Jesus there was room for the faintest attempt at deception. He founded his kingdom upon the Messianic ideas of his nation, “and the anticipation which appears so extraordinary to us, was nevertheless a natural growth out of the whole previous existence of the Jewish people.” To this it may be added, that as He did not assert for himself perfect goodness,² so neither did He claim for Himself perfect knowledge ; and it is worthy of special notice that He *admitted*³ a qualified apprehension, if not a complete ignorance, respecting the arrival of the event which should consummate his predictions.

¹ Whilst it is easy (says M. Renan) to account for the faith of the generation which heard the words of Christ and his apostles, the faith of the second generation, when those words had not been answered by the event, is an inexplicable mystery. Will it be sufficient to account for the ultimate establishment of Christianity to suppose that the perfect character of the Great Teacher and the wisdom of his divine sayings may have weaned believers in his name from the latter-day glories of the Messianic kingdom to the acceptance of the practical qualifications with which that hope was accompanied ?

² Luke xviii. 19.

³ Matt. xxiv. 36 ; Mark xiii. 32.

It is, moreover, a consolation to remember that, in venturing to call in question the hermeneutical verdict of eighteen centuries, our arguments have been drawn from the sacred source alone,¹ and not from our own ideas of the fitness or the unfitness of things. We have not called in question the improbability of a sudden and convulsive "end of all things," because of the proof afforded by the law of continuity and the fact that nature does nothing *per saltum*, that all things will continue to-morrow as they have done to-day; neither have we repudiated the destruction by fire of the material world because of the recoil which tender minds might experience at the thought of a conflagration of this beautiful earth kindled by the hand of the benevolent Artificer himself. We have not concluded the Second Advent to be unworthy of the attention of reasonable men because of mediæval representations of that event which invest it with a ludicrous and childish terror, nor have we framed an argument against it because of the impossibility of conceiving a Coming with the clouds of heaven which should at one and the same time be—visible to all mankind—an idea which could only have been entertained on the supposition that the earth was a plane.

¹ The evidence from Scripture adduced in behalf of the position we have ventured to entertain may be advantageously compared with that brought forward from the same source in behalf of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Of the first it may be unhesitatingly affirmed that the testimony afforded to it is direct and positive, whilst that given to the latter is drawn from inference only; the much-disputed text 1 John v. 7, not found in the Sin., Alex. and Vat. MSS., being at last surrendered as untenable. If the truth of a doctrine be made to depend upon the number and definite character of the texts by which it is supported, then surely that of the approaching Advent stands on a vantage ground which is not occupied by the other. It may then be fairly asked, on which side is there most danger of fighting against God? Whether on the part of those who interpret Scripture in its plain and obvious sense, irrespectively of unforeseen and unwelcome conclusions; or on that of those who distort or evade its legitimate meaning in the vain hope of preserving intact the sayings of Christ.

We have not ventured to indulge suspicion respecting the fitness, religious or social, of the country to which Messiah is expected to return, nor to inquire how far the inhabitants of the world in general, and of Palestine in particular, are prepared for his reception. We have not rested our case upon the physical difficulties involved in the notion of a pilgrimage of all nations to Jerusalem to offer the sacrifices and join in the worship of the Temple, neither have we denounced such a proceeding, although it might not be unreasonable to do so, as a relapse from Christianity to Judaism. These, and similar objections, might possibly have been overruled, had we been able to find in Holy Writ that a real foundation existed for the event with which they are supposed to be connected. A critical and careful examination of all the passages which bear upon the subject has led to the painful yet inevitable conclusion, that the dogma of a Second Coming of the Lord at some imaginary end of the world, *yet future*, is one which, however naturally it might be the result of tradition, is not justified by those texts of Scripture which are generally adduced in its support. "My study of the New Testament at this time," says a deep thinker, "had made it impossible for me to overlook, that the Apostles held it to be a duty of all disciples to expect a near and sudden destruction of the earth by fire, and constantly to be expecting *the return of the Lord from heaven*." This is the conclusion at which all honest minds must, sooner or later, arrive—a conclusion compelled by the obvious and natural sense of the terms employed, and which can only be evaded by processes which savour of critical disingenuousness and literary equivocation. Religion, more than anything else, demands perfect intellectual sincerity, and should not even be suspected. It ceases to be regarded as of value when it upholds anything doubtful, or palpably untrue; and it presses upon our mind with a weight which we cannot describe, that the doctrine whose authority we have ventured to dispute is not only calculated to inspire thinking minds with distrust of religion, but has

a tendency, because of the connection in which it stands with other important teaching, to impair the reverence due to what have been justly called "the granite sayings of Christ." We are free to confess that while no man yields to us in respect for the latter, we have not an equal regard for alarming conjectures respecting the dissolution of this material universe, which neither commend themselves to our reason by their agreement with natural laws, nor by the soundness of the Scriptural interpretation by which they are defended; and are disposed to think that the eschatological might be dissociated from the moral element in Christianity with gain to the efficiency as well as to the permanence of the religion itself.

Errors are not the less errors because through the want of ability to detect them they have been perpetuated through many generations: they are only more difficult to eradicate in consequence of their general acceptance and long standing. A religion that wraps itself up in its own virtue, and obstinately refuses inquiry, is not suited for reasonable men—much less can hope to extend its influence to distant lands or to exact from other systems a right of investigation which it declines for itself. Churches are no more made for eternity than buildings; they only prolong their existence by timely and judicious restoration. This may be more easily done in the case of the Church of England, which is essentially a Protestant, and therefore self-reforming Church, than in that of ecclesiastical establishments which claim to be infallible. She did not at once and for ever arrive at an immutable perfection when, three hundred years ago, she severed herself from Rome, but only laid down the principle by which she would afterwards be guided, as the political reformers of 1832 laid down the principle which has led to recent changes. The Reformation, it has been said, was only "the first act of a drama *which has yet to be played out*, and it may be expected that our own age will see questions stirred, more searching even than any that were mooted then." It is our firm belief

that the time for putting the remaining scenes upon the stage of public opinion is not far distant. Doubts, never dreamed of till now, are rising to the surface; old opinions are breaking up, darkness is indeed on the face of the prophetic creation and the inspired interpreter has not yet been found. What answer will be made to this heavy and crushing charge brought forward in these pages we cannot tell. A method not unfrequently adopted is to meet such objections with contemptuous silence—a method, however, wholly inexcusable in the case of men who claim for themselves the office of ministers and stewards to prepare and make ready the way of the Lord's Second Advent in the spirit and power of Elias, and whose reticence on the subject of prophecy and its interpretation is even more culpable than the hierophantic ravings they are wont to condemn. Some cast the burden of their conscience upon their creeds and make them responsible for the dogma "*Unde venturus est judicare vivos et mortuos*"; forgetting that the universal consent of an illiterate age confers no warrant for immunity from error, and that the conclusions of a peculiar period form no precedent for an altered time. Others again call to their aid that safety-valve of modern interpreters, the double sense of prophecy; a principle under the application of which Scripture becomes indefinite and may be made to mean whatever the interpreter chooses. It is superfluous to observe that these and like arguments in favour of a so-called orthodoxy, only serve to exhibit the weakness of the defence, whilst the difficulty they seek to remove is untouched. It might therefore be more honest to admit that a serious mistake has been incorporated into Christian teaching; that "Biblical criticism has been hitherto found truer to the traditions of the Church than to the words of Christ;" that if she would maintain not only her authority but her very existence, the Church will have to reform her creeds and to abandon her traditions, and that Christianity, as hitherto understood must give place to Christianity as alone it can

be understood hereafter—not as a state of high religious ecstasy as in the Apostolic age—not as a controversial protest against Roman Catholicism as at the Reformation—not as a string of bare dogmatic assertions as formulated in the creeds—not as a system of dry theological propositions as stereotyped in the Articles—but as an “Everlasting Gospel”—not attended with the convulsion of material things, but with the “power” of social regeneration, and the “glory” of a new life—recognising the moral teaching of Jesus as the perfect rule of life and conduct, and the example of Jesus as the highest type of active and disinterested virtue presented to the imitation of mankind.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.



THE FOURTH GOSPEL AND THE SYNOPTICS.

AN attempt has not unfrequently been made to harmonize the four Gospels, and with a few unimportant variations a general agreement has been established between the first three, and hence the term synoptic commonly applied to them. The Fourth Gospel, however, obstinately refuses to be placed on parallel lines with the rest, and maintains an unique and separate character. Among the most remarkable discrepancies between these two records of the life of Jesus (for they are but two) it may be mentioned that the *Logos* doctrine is not found in the Synoptics, although it forms the key-note of the Fourth Gospel. Similarly that of the *Paraclete* is peculiar to that Gospel, and equally with that of the *Logos* is found in the writings of the Montanists. The famous Paschal controversy affords a still more decisive mark of difference. According to the Synoptists and St. Paul the last meal of which Jesus partook with his disciples was the Passover. According to the Fourth Gospel the last supper is not in any way connected with that Jewish rite, but is made "*Before the feast of the Passover*" (John xiii. 1), a position confirmed by the circumstance that, at the examination of Jesus before Pilate, the Jews "went not into the judgment hall lest they should be defiled, *but that they might eat the Passover*," the same day being also called, "*The preparation of the Passover*" (John xviii. 28; xix. 14, 42). As a further mark of difference we may instance the elaborate discourses put into the mouth of Jesus, which have nothing in common with the terse sayings recorded by the other

Evangelists: the absence of the parables common to the first three Gospels, when "without a parable spake He not unto them:" the peculiarity of the miracles (especially the marked absence of demoniacal expulsions), which, for the most part, are found nowhere else: the controversial style, in which we discern allusion to later heresies: the mystical character of the book which obscures its meaning and is attributable in part to the writer's fondness for spiritual application: the figure of Christ, perfect from the first, and more in harmony with modern conceptions respecting Him than with those which alone can be legitimately formed from the Synoptic Gospels.

On the traditional theory that the Fourth Gospel is the work of the Apostle, the effect which the recognition of this claim might have upon the credit to be attached to the Synoptic histories is of too great importance to be passed by without notice. A close examination shows that they do not merely differ as all independent narrators must, but absolutely contradict each other, making it evident that both cannot accurately represent the life and teaching of Jesus. If, according to the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is recognised as the Messiah by the Baptist and others at the commencement of his ministry; the Synoptic account, which represents the fact as supernaturally revealed to Peter alone (Matt. xvi. 17), late in the ministry of Jesus, besides the charge of secrecy, is less reliable. If, according to the Fourth Gospel, Jesus exercises his ministry contemporaneously with that of John the Baptist (John iii. 22, 24); the Synoptics, which relate that Jesus did not preach or collect disciples until after the imprisonment of John (Matt. iv. 12, 25), are open to mistrust. If, according to the Fourth Gospel, the Baptist did not know Jesus before his baptism (John i. 31, 34); difficulty is put in the way of believing that the mothers of Jesus and of John were cousins, warmly sympathetic concerning the two children (Luke i. 39, 45). If, according to the Fourth Gospel, the Baptist points out Jesus as the Messiah—this knowledge

having been communicated to him by a miraculous sign (John i. 29, 36) ; he could hardly, from his prison, have expressed the doubt recorded in the Synoptics, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another" (Matt. xi. 3). If, according to the Fourth Gospel, Jesus preaches the Gospel to the Samaritans, a circumstance which appears to call forth the apology, "For He must needs go through Samaria ;" it is hard to reconcile this with the command to the disciples recorded in the Synoptics, "Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any *city* of the Samaritans enter ye not" (Matt. x. 5). If, as the Fourth Gospel represents, Jesus preached in Jerusalem discourses so lengthy and so very important ; it is unintelligible that the Synoptics should not discern their importance, or should be ignorant that they were spoken. If the Fourth Gospel places the cleansing of the temple at the beginning and the Synoptics at the close of the ministry of Jesus ; if, in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is present at the marriage in Cana of Galilee five days after his baptism, and, in the Synoptics, is immediately led by the Spirit for forty days into the wilderness, and thence into Galilee (Luke iv. 14) : if, in the Fourth Gospel, the raising of Lazarus occupies a prominent place as the event which led to the apprehension of Jesus, and, in the Synoptics, by an error of judgment, or through ignorance of the fact, this pre-eminent miracle is altogether omitted : if, in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus washes his disciples' feet at the last supper, and commands them to do this to each other as He had done it to them (a practice of which there is not the slightest trace in the primitive Church) ; while, in the Synoptics, He institutes the Eucharist and bids them "Do this in remembrance of Him" (a practice everywhere observed from the earliest times) : if, in the Fourth Gospel, the anointing of Jesus by a woman at Bethany takes place *six* days (John xii. 1), and in the Synoptics, *two* days before the Passover (Matt. xxvi. 2 ; Mark xiv. 1) : if, in the Fourth Gospel, the crucifixion takes place on the day of the preparation of the Passover, and in the Synop-

tics, on the great day of unleavened bread : if, in the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is yet standing before Pilate at the *sixth* hour (John xix. 14), whilst in the Synoptics He is hanging on the cross at the *third* hour (Mark xv. 25) : if, according to the Fourth Gospel, Joseph of Arimathea goes *secretly* to Pilate, "for fear of the Jews" (John xix. 38) ; and in the Synoptics *boldly* to beg the body of Jesus (Mark xv. 43) : if, according to the Fourth Gospel, the body of Jesus is embalmed by Nicodemus and Joseph on the evening of the day of the crucifixion (John xix. 42) ; whilst in the Synoptics, the women come the next morning but one after the crucifixion with sweet spices to anoint Him (Mark xvi. 12 ; Luke xxiii. 56) : if, according to the Fourth Gospel, Mary Magdalene comes alone to the sepulchre "while it was yet dark" (John xx. 1, 2) : and in the Synoptics three women (among whom was Mary Magdalene) come there "at the rising of the sun" (Mark xvi. 2) : if, according to the Fourth Gospel, Thomas was not with the disciples when they first saw the Lord (John xx. 24), whilst in the Synoptics, Thomas was one of the *eleven* present at his first appearance to his disciples after the resurrection (Matt. xxviii. 16, 17) : if, according to the Fourth Gospel, the future abode of the devout is heaven whilst in the Synoptics the renewed purified earth is supposed to be the dwelling-place of the saints,—it is plain that the writer of the former book moves in a theological world wholly different from the latter, and that both cannot be equally worthy of credit. In whatever degree therefore we accept the Fourth Gospel as reliable, we detract from the trustworthiness of the other Gospels. Two opposite theories of fact and doctrine cannot be true at the same time : the one must necessarily exclude the other, and we must choose between them. The Fourth Gospel, which was not written as some have supposed, to supply the deficiencies of the preceding histories, must either control the Synoptics, or the Synoptics the Fourth Gospel.

The difference between them may be seen still more con-

spicuously from a comparison of their respective style and language. In the first three Gospels, Jesus speaks with terseness and simplicity : his language is not studied, and has no tinge of Alexandrian scholasticism, but is such as would be natural to a Galilean teacher. The very reverse of this is perceptible in the Fourth Gospel. There his teaching is mystical, abstract, artificial, and obscure. Long and elaborate discourses take the place of the short and pithy aphorisms of the Synoptic Gospels, and wear the aspect of disquisitions upon Jesus rather than of sentiments delivered by Jesus himself. It may seem morally impossible that the same teacher could have uttered such different language, or have employed such different modes of conveying instruction. The reasoning which appears to us conclusive on this point is similar to that which has been already used of the two books claiming the name and authority of John. If Jesus habitually uttered the moral maxims recorded in the Synoptics, he did not habitually deal in the transcendental theology of the Fourth Gospel ; or if He couched his teaching in the terms of the Fourth Gospel, the terse and aphoristic style of the Synoptics very ill represents Him.

Widely, however, as the discourses of Jesus recorded by the first three Evangelists differ from those of the Fourth Gospel, the latter differs yet more widely from the former in its report of the sayings of John the Baptist. Here is no preaching of the gospel of the kingdom, no announcement of its imminent approach, no warning to flee from the wrath to come, no axe laid to the root of the trees, no burning of the chaff with unquenchable fire. The prophet of the wilderness assumes the character of a Gnostic philosopher. The metaphysical language of the schools takes the place of exhortations to repentance, and terms borrowed from late heresies are as ready in the mouth of the precursor as in that of Jesus himself ; presenting a difficulty wholly incapable of solution. It is remarkable that in the Fourth Gospel the same pen is visible throughout, and the same ideas are continually repro-

duced under a slightly varied form. Jesus, the Baptist, and the writer of the book, when he speaks in his own person, use the same terms. To put these similar terms in the mouth of Jesus and the Baptist, is not only to make them employ a phraseology different from that attributed to them in the Synoptics, but to make them adopt the style and thoughts of the writer.

To difference of style and language may be added that of general plan and object. With some unimportant variations, the Synoptics, as their name imports, agree in presenting a connected history of the life and teaching of Jesus. Commencing with his genealogy and baptism in the Jordan, they represent Him as confining his ministry chiefly to Galilee where He preaches the near approach of the kingdom of God. Large crowds of enthusiastic and admiring followers attend his steps, and become devotedly attached to his person. Here it is that He utters his exquisite parables and works his principal miracles, and his fame soon penetrates the adjacent countries and spreads as far as Jerusalem itself. The Pharisees, indignant at the unprecedented success of the new Teacher, enter at once upon a course of vehement opposition, and send emissaries from the capital, who represent Him as an innovator and a fanatic, attribute his cures to demoniacal agency, and demand of Him signs from heaven, which He was unwilling or unable to perform. The result of this interference is mutual anger and recrimination ; the Pharisees imputing to Him madness and folly, and He in turn denouncing them as blind and hypocrites. Not content with his success in Galilee, where the simple inhabitants were strongly impressed in his favour, He resolves, in spite of the protestations of his disciples, to attack sacerdotal authority at its headquarters, and to preach the doctrines He had taught in Galilee in Jerusalem itself. At first He appeared to be well received by the populace, who hail with joy his public entrance into Jerusalem, and acknowledge Him to be Messiah. His triumph, however, was of short duration. His old and powerful

enemies, the Pharisees, renewed their accusations, and Jesus, worn out and disgusted with a reception so different from that which had been accorded to Him in Galilee, retired in despair from the unequal contest. The provocation, however, had cut too deeply to be forgiven. His ruin was speedily determined, and he fell a victim to their rage and malice. Such, in a few words, is a picture of the life of Jesus given in the Synoptics. It is natural, unconstrained, and life-like, and carries with it the aspect of general probability.

If we turn to the picture given in the Fourth Gospel, we cannot help being struck with the immense dissimilarity. Here we have no genealogy, no record of infancy, no sojourn in Galilee, no temptation, no transfiguration, no Jewish Passover, no agony in the garden, no cry of anguish from the cross, no development of Messianic doctrine, no second advent, and no earthly kingdom. Jesus is placed, from the commencement at Jerusalem, where, with the exception of occasional visits into Galilee, He is in constant altercation with the Jews. There does not appear in the Fourth Gospel the faintest attempt to give a connected history of the life of Jesus. It is true that it is not without unity of design, but it is a dogmatic and not an historical unity. Its chief object is the development of doctrine and principally that of the manifestation of the *Logos* in the person of Jesus Christ. This exaltation of Jesus is seen in the peculiar character of the miracles He is said to perform, which assert his power over nature, and reveal his intimate union with the Father. The first miracle at Cana of Galilee (John ii. 1-11) has special reference to this exaltation. Jesus refuses to perform the miracle at the request of his mother, showing that as the Divine *Logos* He was above the conditions of humanity. The healing of the nobleman's son at Capernaum (John iv. 46-54) has in it this peculiarity, that, whereas, in the Synoptics, the word of power is pronounced at Capernaum itself, "not far from the house"; in the Fourth Gospel the word is spoken from a distance of one day's journey from Capernaum. The

walking upon the sea of Galilee (John vi. 16-21) receives a remarkable addition from the same event as recorded in the Synoptics, for no sooner had Jesus entered into the ship than it was "immediately at the land whither they went." The cure of the blind man (John ix.) is greater than the cures of blind men in the other Gospels, for he is "blind from his birth." The raising of Lazarus (John xi.), assuredly the most stupendous miracle in the New Testament and confined to the Fourth Gospel, exceeds previous resuscitations of dead bodies, in that "he had lain in the grave four days already." The prayer on this occasion, if prayer it can be called, affords another instance of this exaltation. In the Synoptics Jesus prays much and often: at his baptism, on the top of mountains, in solitary places, at his agony in the garden, upon the cross, and upon one occasion it is said that He continued all night in prayer to God. In the Fourth Gospel Jesus is Divine and needs not the aid of prayer on his own account, but only with a view of making an impression on the minds of others.

The dialectic contests peculiar to the Fourth Gospel, *e.g.* John ii. 19-21; iii. 4; iv. 11; viii. 51-57; xi. 11, 12; in which the wisdom of Jesus is contrasted with the ignorance and dulness of those with whom He comes into contact, exhibit, as the writer intended they should do, the superior intelligence of Him who is the "Light of the world." The persons who take part in these dialogues are intellectually degraded with a view to exalt Christ, by way of contrast. Their conversations present a string of wilful misunderstandings, irrelevant questions, and unintelligible answers. They persist in taking literally what He means spiritually, and seem utterly incapable of apprehending the mystical nature of his sayings. A similar desire to exalt the *Logos* Christ is perceptible in those passages of his career which precede his crucifixion and death. It would not be consistent with the object of the writer that the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel should exhibit the weakness of the Jesus of the Synoptics,

and therefore in John xii. 27-30, instead of requiring, as in the Synoptics, that an angel should strengthen Him as in the garden of Gethesemane, a voice from heaven comes not for his own but, as in xi. 42, for the people's sake. Instead of requesting the support of his disciples, He is Himself their prop and spiritual stay. A gulf wide enough to separate humanity from Divinity stretches between the despondency manifested in the Synoptics and the triumphant exclamation, "Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." A similar exaltation is observable in the description of his arrest in the garden (John xviii. 1-11). According to the Synoptics, Jesus is in an agony of fear, and his "sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground;" in the Fourth Gospel He is calm and collected, "knowing all things that should come upon him." In the former the disciples are bid to watch with a view of preventing the treachery of Judas; in the latter, Jesus goes boldly forth to meet the traitor, and the persons sent to arrest Him "went backward and fell to the ground," a statement which finds no echo in the Synoptics. In his examination before Pilate, who in this Gospel exhibits a strange fear of the accused, Jesus asserts a mysterious superiority, and tells the Roman Governor that "he could have no power at all against him except it were given him from above." The same dignity and superiority to moral and physical suffering is continued to the last. Himself "bearing his cross" which is not laid upon another, as in the Synoptics, He is led to Calvary; and after a brief crucifixion, of three hours, during which He utters no cry of pain or abandonment, the Divine *Logos* having "power to lay down his life and power to take it again," utters the triumphant and consummating cry, "It is finished," and bowing his head, gives up the ghost.

We may add to this, that in the Fourth Gospel Jesus has no longer any relations with Judaism, and the appellation "The Jews," so frequently employed, is the usual term for all who are hostile to Christianity. He has no sympathy with the

Messianic expectations or the religious observances of the Jewish people. He speaks of "the law of the Jews," as "*your law*," as if it were not also his, and of "the feast of the Jews," "the purifying of the Jews," as a stranger to their nation might naturally do, but in a tone far different from what might be expected from a devout Galilean. Indeed, the position of the Jews as the favoured people seems in this Gospel altogether reversed. Jesus has other sheep which are not of this fold (John x. 16); the Samaritans believe on Him (John iv. 39); Greeks come up unto the feast to see Jesus (John xii. 20); the Romans come and take away their place and nation (John xi. 48); this last passage pointing, perhaps, not so much to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus as to that yet more complete extinction of Jewish worship and nationality which followed the revolt under Bar-Cocheba (A.D. 135). The book, so far from bearing marks of a Galilean authorship, is written for Gentiles, and not for Jews. Jewish names are interpreted, on the supposition that their meaning is unintelligible to the persons addressed. Cephas is, by interpretation, "A stone." Siloam is, by interpretation, "Sent." Messiah is also called "Christ." Thomas is said to be equivalent to Didymus. Golgotha is "a place of a skull." Gabbatha means "The Pavement." Jewish customs are also explained. The Passover is "a feast of the Jews." The feast of Dedication occurs at the season of winter. The temple is a place "whither the Jews always resort." Bethlehem is "the town where David was." The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. The office of High Priest is erroneously affirmed to be *annual* (John xi. 49) like that of the Roman Consuls. The manner of the Jews to bury is described. Doctrines crop out, as it were, in passing. The Baptist declares that Jesus was preferred before him, "*for He was before him*." Marks of a late date of composition are also interspersed. Jesus once calls himself, by an evident anachronism, "*Jesus Christ*" (John xvii. 3), and the same title is once applied to Him by the Baptist (John i. 17). The expression, "Little

children," familiar to the writer of the First Epistle, once occurs (John xiii. 33). The phrase, "The Son of man *which is in heaven*" is a free comment of a writer familiar with the idea of the Ascension, but meaningless in the mouth of Jesus prior to the Ascension. Palpable anachronisms slip out as it were by accident. Who but a member of the future Christian Church could say of Jesus: "Of his fulness *have we all received*" (John i. 16), or "The only-begotten Son (a name applied to Jesus only in this Gospel and in 1 John iv. 9), which is in the bosom of the Father, *He hath declared Him*" (John i. 18) —expressions consistent in the mouth of one who lived at a later period of Christian history, but out of place in the lips of the precursor of the Messiah. The words, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me *where I am*, that they may behold my glory" (John xvii. 24), exhibit a chronological inadvertency on the part of the writer. The promise, "Blessed are they that have not seen (me) *and yet have believed*," is only intelligible on the supposition that it is a reflection of the writer subsequent to the death of Jesus. The obscure passage, "All that ever came before (*instead of*) me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them" (John x. 8), may refer not to the ancient Hebrew prophets who preceded his first Coming, but to the false Christs and false prophets who should precede his second Coming. A similar anachronism is observable in the difficult text, "I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour; other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours" (John iv. 38), in which reference is probably made to the mission of Peter and John to Samaria after its conversion to Christianity by Philip (Acts viii. 5-17).

On the supposition that the twenty-first chapter is part of the original Gospel, it is plain that John was then no longer in existence; for the writer, in contradicting the legend prevalent in those days, and founded probably on Matt. xvi. 28, respecting the exemption of St. John from the common lot of all men, observes that Jesus did not say

he should not die, but, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"—implying that since John was dead the popular rumour was without foundation. The pre-eminence assigned to John above the other disciples would also seem to militate against a Johannean authorship for the Fourth Gospel. Among other marks of superiority John is prominently put forward as the disciple whom Jesus loved, who leaned on his breast at supper, to whom Peter confided his request respecting the traitor, who alone of all the disciples stood by the cross of Jesus, and to whose care he committed his mother. It is difficult to believe that, if John was the author, he could have laid stress on circumstances which reflected so much honour upon himself; while, on the other hand, it is extremely natural that some disciple of his school may have wished unduly to extol his master. Other proofs of a late date are not wanting. The Fourth Gospel is certainly later than the Apocalypse and the three first Gospels for it appropriates and remodels their ideas. Its adoption of the doctrines of the *Logos* and the *Paraclete* bring it down to a still later period. Above all, its relations with Gnosticism, which the writer, perhaps, does not so much refute as recast into a Christian shape, make it descend yet lower in order of time; the Valentinian theory with which it corresponds most closely being traceable to A.D. 130, 140, of the Christian era. To this it may be added that the book is not expressly quoted as the work of the apostle John before the latter part of the second century, which was most probably the time of its composition. There are allusions to the Fourth Gospel in Justin Martyr, Hermas, Ignatius, and Polycarp, but there is no external evidence that it was written by John before the time of Irenæus A.D. 178.

The conclusion, then, that we draw from this examination of the Fourth Gospel is, briefly, that it is not so much a *bonâ fide* record of the actual life of Jesus as a development of mystical theology. It is an essay rather than a narrative, dealing far less with genuine facts than with abstract prin-

ciples. The writer is not so much concerned to represent faithfully the sayings and doings of Jesus, as to exhibit them in a metaphysical shape. And so the domain of literal fact is deserted for that of spiritual mysticism, strict truth for polemical discussion, history yields to doctrine, and the veracity that is of all time to the local theology of the Alexandrine school. We thus see how names, like those of Nicodemus and Lazarus : places, like Bethany (E.V. Bethabara) beyond Jordan and Ænon near to Salim, mistaken for a town, probably meaning fountains, Siloam wrongly translated Sent, showing that the writer was not a native of Palestine ; events like the marriage in Cana of Galilee and the cure of the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda, are used, not in good faith, but symbolically. Similarly, long disputations arise with ideal Jews and imaginary Pharisees, which have no other foundation than the author's mind. Persons appear upon the scene and disappear, of whom no one knows whence they come or whither they go. The same unreality attaches to the portrait of the great Master himself. The Jesus of the Fourth Gospel is not the Jesus of Nazareth, or of Galilee, or of the Synoptics, but a Hellenistic philosopher. His figure approaches nearer to symbol than to reality. There is nothing human or life-like about it. He is a mythical abstraction, and not the loving, natural, tempted, suffering *man* of the three first Gospels. It is that of the Divine *Logos*, and not that of an ardent Jewish reformer, disgusted with falsehood and hypocrisy. It is the Christ of dogma, but not the Christ of history.

In the face of this evidence against the genuineness of the Fourth Gospel, an honest and critical student of the New Testament will be reluctant to base theological propositions elsewhere unsupported, or but feebly supported, by Scripture, upon its sole authority (an act from which the Nicene Fathers cannot be absolved), or to frame a harmony of the four Gospels in which its doctrinal statements shall be suffered to control the teaching of the rest. So long, indeed, as it holds its ground as the undoubted work of the son of Zebedee, the

Fourth Gospel may naturally be made a standard of faith from which there is no appeal; but with the loss of confidence in its apostolic origin, it ceases to have historical or even canonical value. Justly liable to suspicion from the comparison instituted between it and the Apocalypse, it becomes still more questionable from the numerous and, apparently, irreconcilable contradictions between it and the Synoptic histories. Reasonable men, who are capable of weighing evidence, will henceforth require more satisfactory proof of the necessity of a fourfold Evangel than that afforded by Irenæus, who says that there must have been four Gospels, and only four, because there are four winds, and because the living creatures seen in vision by Ezekiel are four in number. To the objection that the mention of particular localities and even of the hour at which events took place is an indication of its being the work of an eye-witness, it may be answered that the Gospel of St. Mark, which certainly is not an autoptic record, abounds with similar marks of precision and detail. To the further objection that because the book is replete with exalted sentiments, herefore it must have been the work of an Apostle: it may be replied that this assumes the very point to be proved, and that a Mahometan or a Buddhist would defend the sacredness of his Koran or his Shaster in the same way. Neither, again, can the avidity with which the book was received after the middle of the second century be urged as a valid argument in favour of its genuineness; for the want supplied by the Fourth Gospel was beginning to be deeply felt, and it comprised within itself the elements of reunion and success. The last objection we shall mention, that of M. Renan, that if the Fourth Gospel is not authentic the deception is without parallel in the Apostolic age, needs only to be named in order to be refuted. Many books, among which we may include that of Enoch, the Second Book of Esdras, and the Second Epistle of Peter, now notoriously spurious, passed as genuine in the early ages of the Church; for so far from being deemed an offence against literary or moral honesty, it was thought pious to

recommend truth by putting it in the mouth of some great teacher. It is probable that this has been done in the case of the Fourth Gospel, and that the anonymous writer, without actually committing himself to the assertion that he is John, the son of Zebedee, has *insinuated* (John xiii. 23, 25, xviii. 15, xix. 26, 27, xx. 8) that the book is the production of that Apostle, with a view of procuring for it an authority it could not otherwise have obtained.

POSTSCRIPTUM.

THESE sheets were already in the Press when an article appeared in the *Nineteenth Century* for July, 1878, entitled "The Second Advent and the Church Question," by Dr. G. Vance Smith. The author of this able paper not only reproduces in a clear and concise manner the arguments brought forward in behalf of our position, but carries them to a point beyond it, and questions the Divine authority of the Church. This we had previously done in a former edition,¹ but not so clearly or to such an extent as in the present paper. Whether Jesus and his Apostles, under the expectation of an immediate end of all things, *could* have contemplated the permanent establishment of an ecclesiastical system, is a question which we may safely leave in the hands of Dr. Vance Smith; the point now mainly insisted on being the substantial agreement between this paper and the chapter headed "The Unreality of the Second Advent." It is a matter of unspeakable consolation to the author to feel that he does not stand alone as the advocate of an unpopular theory, but that he has the

¹ "Even the duration of the Church itself, an institution fondly deemed perpetual, is necessarily circumscribed by the period appointed for the Advent; the office of its ministers to proclaim the Messianic kingdom ceasing with the coming of the King himself. To assert, therefore, a permanence for the Church beyond the term occupied by apostolic men, is to create a state of things not contemplated by its original founders, and foreign to the conceptions of the writers of the New Testament." —*John, or the Apocalypse of the New Testament*, p. 286. Longmans: London, 1870.

support of a name already distinguished in theological literature,¹ and associated with those of eminent Biblical scholars in the work of revision. But whilst convinced that the conclusion at which both writers have arrived will eventually commend itself to reasonable men, there is yet a shadow of excuse for those who cling tenaciously to established formularies. The disputed doctrine is found in a creed which (correctly or otherwise) bears the name of the Apostles, and it is not therefore surprising that the Second Advent of their Master should form a conspicuous article of faith. They *did* believe most conscientiously in the speedy reappearance of Christ; they *did* assert that doctrine emphatically in their writings; they *did* look for that event as the consummation of all their hopes; they *did* expect to behold Him personally before that generation had passed away. With us, of a later time, the case is very different. Ages upon ages, and not simply one generation, have rolled away, and the promise has not been kept, and no indication of a coming at any other time is to be met with in the Scriptures. The alternative, painful as it is, may not be suppressed. In the mouth of apostolic men, belief in a Second Advent was both reasonable and just; in our lips, such an expectation is simply *irrelevant and false*.² In confirmation of our position we subjoin, with the permission of the writer, some abridged portions of his most valuable article.

THE SECOND ADVENT AND THE CHURCH QUESTION.

"I begin with the remark, hardly, I suppose, open to dispute,

¹ "The Bible and Popular Theology," by G. Vance Smith, B.A., Ph.D.

² As the command given to Daniel, "Go thou thy way till the end be, for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot (*rise to thy glory*, LXX) at the end of the days" (Dan. xii. 13), appears to have been a source of the doctrine of the Resurrection of Jesus; so the coming of one like a Son of Man (a term borrowed from Ezekiel *passim*, and applied to Daniel, vii. 13; viii. 17) with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days, foreshadowed his return. In the opinion of the Sibyl the reappearing Messiah is accompanied by Daniel. See Note, p. 251.

that the word CHRISTIAN, in its original import and use, as well as by its etymology, denoted one who acknowledged in Jesus of Nazareth the expected Christ. As *Χριστός* represented the older Hebrew word *Messiah*, so the persons who were called *Χριστιανοί* first at Antioch were persons who might have been otherwise designated as *Messiahists*, to which appellation the name actually applied to them was equivalent. The early disciples were Jews who observed the law of Moses and had embraced the belief that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah foretold by the prophets and expected by the people. Christianity was simply Judaism *plus* the belief in Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ; nor did the earlier disciples ever think of laying aside their Judaism, on adopting a new belief.

Further, the ancient Messianic belief of the Jews was such that Jesus of Nazareth did not by any means fulfil the expectations which it popularly involved. Judging from various expressions, the Messiah looked for was to be one who should be possessed of temporal power. He should redeem his people from their subjection to the heathen, and transfer to them the supreme dominion possessed by their oppressors. Much of this earthly element clung to the thoughts of many who followed 'the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth' (Matt. xxi. 11). We may judge this from the inability or slowness, even of the personal companions of Jesus, to understand the declarations of their Master respecting his approaching death. We read that they had "trusted that it had been He that should have redeemed Israel," and that when He spoke to them of his approaching death "they understood none of these things." In truth, the rejection and death of the Messiah, at the hands of his own people, could not, we may well understand, have been anticipated either by the disciples or by the nation at large. Such a result was inconsistent with their most cherished aspirations, as well as with the predominant spirit of those ancient prophecies which were the source of the great national hope. And so, when the blow fell, it found the

adherents of the Christ wholly unprepared, and in the hour of his danger, 'all the disciples forsook Him and fled.'

And thus He died ; and for the moment, to friend and foe alike, it must have appeared that every hope founded upon Him as the Christ was at an end. But it was not so ; for speedily the belief sprang up that He was not really destroyed, or permanently gone away from the world, but, on the contrary, that He was 'risen again,' that the promised kingdom was only postponed for a while, that the crucified one would soon return to the earth as a mighty and glorified king, to sit in judgment upon the world, and in the end to reign with his saints in the long expected kingdom.

These ideas are expressed in various phases, and in allusions more or less clear, both in the synoptical Gospels and in other parts of the New Testament. The expectation of the visible and personal return lingered long in the Church. It is found in most of the earlier Fathers, and it was, without doubt, an important and all-pervading element in the primitive Christian belief. It was in truth, for a long time, its mainspring, its vital force. How, precisely, the expectation arose, must remain in doubt—whether in the express teaching of Jesus, or in some mere misunderstanding of his words. It is proper, however, to remember that He did, according to the Synoptics, speak in more than one instance of his personal return to the earth. We even read, 'There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom' (Matt. xvi. 27, 28). No fair interpretation of such language as this can make it mean anything else but a visible return within no distant period to assume the office of the Messianic king. The efforts of some expounders to *put into* such words the destruction of Jerusalem, or the outpouring of the Spirit, or the future triumphs of the Gospel, could not be tolerated except in obedience to the dictation of an established orthodoxy.

There is one point that deserves to be specially noted : it is impossible to resolve into figures of speech the various expres-

sions now in question. They are too plain, too frequently repeated, and convey a meaning which is altogether of too definite and positive a kind, to be explained away as merely figurative. Truly, quite enough of this sort of exegetical violence has been done to the New Testament! It is time that it should cease, and that a little more of the respect usually paid to authors called 'profane' should be rendered to books which the mass of the Christian world is so well agreed to accept as 'sacred' and as the very 'word of God.' In other words, it is surely time that the language of these ancient books should be read in its *own* sense, the sense which it is manifestly intended to convey, and that modern expositors should cease their well-meant efforts to compel it into agreement with ecclesiastical systems and theological creeds.

Neither St. Paul, however, nor any other New Testament writer anywhere gives us an exact definition of Christian 'faith.' What it was, was probably too familiar to every one concerned to call for a definition. And very little consideration shows what it was. It is simply the acceptance of the plain and substantial fact that Jesus was Christ, and doubtless along with this, and involved in it, the belief that He would come again to judge the world, according to the speech of Paul at Athens, and other declarations to the same effect. Those who had such 'faith' were Christians, Gentile and Jew alike; and they should be 'saved,' in the 'day of the Lord,' which was drawing nigh, when the Messiah should come to gather in his 'elect' from the four quarters of heaven, and sit in judgment upon the world. Those who did not believe, who rejected the proffered 'salvation,' should be condemned, driven from his presence, and, according to certain well-known expressions, cast into the 'eternal fire' of Gehenna.

The reader who has gone with me thus far, will not refuse to take a step or two farther, and to observe that this characteristic and wide-spread belief respecting the second coming, held by the early Church and by the New Testament writers

in particular, *has not been fulfilled!* Eighteen centuries have passed away, and that which the faithful expected to see within their own generation has never come. They waited in patience, year after year; believing still that the 'coming of the Lord' was 'at hand.' But the Lord did *not* come, neither did the promised kingdom of heaven. Some even mocked and said, 'Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation' (2 Pet. iii. 4). And generations passed and even centuries began to roll away, while the great hope, still cherished, remained still unfulfilled; till by degrees the primitive idea began to die out from the thoughts of believers, and a new character was given to Christian faith. This may be seen in the Apostles' Creed, for example, which only acknowledges the ancient belief on this subject in a vague and cursory way, altogether lacking the substance and vividness of New Testament anticipation. The Nicene Creed is equally brief, merely stating, in words which are scarcely noticeable amidst the other details by which they are accompanied, 'He shall come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead.' Such is the form in our Anglican Prayer-Book; but this is a slight amplification of the original article, which runs thus:—'and He cometh (*καὶ ἐρχομένον*) to judge living and dead.' Thus the belief in Messiah, and his second coming to reign on earth with his elect followers, which formed the very essence of New Testament Christianity,—a belief which was the most powerful inspiration of the first preachers of the Gospel, and long formed, in fact, the characteristic substance of their Christian message,—dropped by degrees out of sight. Theological conceptions more in harmony with the speculative genius of later times gradually took its place. The great Orthodoxies of modern origin scarcely tolerate its presence, the tendency of their expounders being constantly to explain it away and make the words which originally conveyed it mean something else—something that would scarcely have been recognised as

Christian by the original preachers of the 'Gospel of the kingdom.'

But the ancient doctrine is not to be so lightly got rid of! The facts and beliefs of the first times are there, not to be denied, or changed, or eliminated from the record, by any fair historical treatment; nor will the student of the *origines* of Christianity, in his quest for the truth on this subject, be satisfied to go back even to Nicene or Ante-Nicene Fathers, so long as the New Testament is open to his hand. Much less will he rest contented with the forced and non-natural interpretations so often to be found in the pages of modern theologians.

The practical use to be made of the foregoing remarks, and their application to certain modern discussions, are the points which next claim our attention.

The men of the first Christian generations, including the Apostles and the writers of the New Testament, lived, we have seen, in the almost daily expectation of the Second Advent of the Lord and the end of the world. Is it then to be thought that, in this state of mind, they were consciously seeking and intending to lay the foundations of a vast ecclesiastical fabric that should stand for centuries after their time? Is it to be thought that, in the midst of *such* hopes and anticipations, they were consciously devising plans for establishing a sacred order of men to come after them and take their place? acting thus as if the world in which they were living was to continue, not for the few short years that might elapse before the anticipated End, but for untold generations to come? Such a supposition is surely too incongruous and too much out of keeping with all that is known of the early disciples,—men, as they were, remarkable above everything else for their belief that the very earth and heavens of their daily experience were soon to pass away, and be replaced by 'new heavens' and a 'new earth.' Persons in high ecclesiastical position among us, who pride themselves upon exclusively possessing the peculiar virtues and graces of episcopal

ordination and apostolical succession, may reasonably be asked whence these have been *derived*, seeing that the Apostles and the first Christians in general, as known to us by the New Testament, had evidently no idea of leaving such gifts behind them, and cannot well be supposed to have done so unconsciously and without their own knowledge. Independently of the fact that we are nowhere *told* of such an intention, the nature of their belief in the approaching end of all things proves, as conclusively as need be, that they cannot have made, cannot have intended to make, any such provision for the indefinite continuance of their own office as apostles and ministers of the word. Grave and earnest as they were, willing even to lay down their lives for the *truth*, surely they were not men to act with so much appearance of dissimulation, proclaiming openly to the world the speedy return of their Lord, and at the same time concealing within their hearts a great purpose of which they never speak, in reference to the Church organisations of far distant ages.

Thus then it appears that the founders of Christianity were preserved, by the nature of their own Christian belief, from the attempt to dictate the future organization of Churches. The inference is plain, that the Christian nations have not been bound in this respect to one unchangeable type. Happily, the ages have been left free to constitute themselves ecclesiastically, as increasing knowledge and newly developing wants and tendencies may seem to require. Nor can it be doubted that this liberty of theirs, wherewith even Christ Himself 'hath made us free,' will be more and more intelligently understood and largely used, as time passes on.

It follows that what is called the CHURCH, in its organised development, was a kind of *afterthought*, worked out, in the course of time, by post-apostolic men. It was and it is, essentially, a fabric, not of divine but of human construction; and it exists now not by any *divine right*, but by the will and appointment of men, in the same sense in which any other human institution may be said to do so. As it now is, the

Church and the Churches could scarcely have been conceived of, much less planned and set up, by the first generation of believers. Indeed, it is well known to the student of that period that what is really found in the early Christian times is not any organised institution, well compacted together in its different parts, but simply a number of small detached communities, living much apart from the heathen world, having little knowledge of each other, often struggling for existence, and waiting in the earnest expectation of what has never come to pass. The faithful of those times had 'here,' as they believed, 'no continuing city.' They were contented therefore to raise, as it were, a temporary home, such as might stand provisionally until the 'heavenly Jerusalem,' and its celestial temple, were ready for the saints (Rev. xxi. 22).

It is needless to dwell upon the well ascertained fact that in the sixteenth century the State power constantly dominated the Ecclesiastical, and gave to the English Church, even against its own will, the dogmatic and ceremonial character which it still retains, and which, as it would seem, many of its ministers rejoice to retain, as of little less than Divine authority. The judgment of parliaments and of temporal sovereigns—a Henry the Eighth, an Edward the Sixth, an Elizabeth—with their ministers and counsellors, moulded the destinies of the Church of England, and made it what it is. Its hierarchy, its rites and observances, even its doctrinal beliefs, were appointed and legalised for it by instruments and processes the action of which it is particularly easy to trace in our past history, and which it is the purest fiction to designate as anything but simply *human* in their character—even as the great institution itself which they called into existence is at this moment upheld, in all its most distinctive features, by the ordinations of human law. The fact stated involves a principle of great practical importance for the time present. This is, that what has been done in past times and by our ordinary human methods of proceeding, in the way

of founding, re-forming, and regulating the Church, may properly be done *again* and *now*, so far as required.

In any reconstruction of the national Establishment, congregations and their ministers should be left *free* to hold, profess, and speak the Truth, as they see it, the State, or nation, in no way interfering except for the regulation and care of tangible property or revenues. The revision of the national Liturgy should avoid the imposition of doctrinal creeds, and should in other respects be in the interest of individual and congregational liberty and sincerity of thought. One great and comprehensive Church organised not by smaller sections of people but by the nation itself, and so constituted as to include, *on some just principle*, the great mass of the population, *this*, if it could be had, would be a better and grander thing than a multitude of sects, separately organised, sometimes meanly administered, too frequently in want of money, and perpetually competing with one another for popular favour. Possibly too, if the idea of Divine Right were abandoned—and it is utterly baseless, as much so as that of the divine right of kings—a united and common national Establishment *for all* might be within our reach. Why not as much so as a great and comprehensive school system, or the more ordinary institutions of political life? Such a change would give to all religious persons—that is to say, the great majority of the English people—a better chance than ever they have yet had, of standing and acting together upon the broad basis of a *true* religious and ecclesiastical *equality*—with the feeling that they were all treated, by the Law and by the State, with impartial justice.

But neither is 'disestablishment,' as commonly recommended, the true path to religious peace and equality. That could only tend to the continued maintenance of existing divisions and differences, and the nourishment for ages to come of the bad spirits of sectarian rivalry, competition, and mutual disesteem, of which religion at the present time, as for generations past, has been the too fruitful parent in Eng-

lish society:—RELIGION, which ought to be the spring of every healing influence, making men as friends and brothers, kindly, helpful, tolerant towards each other, bringing thus glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will towards men!"

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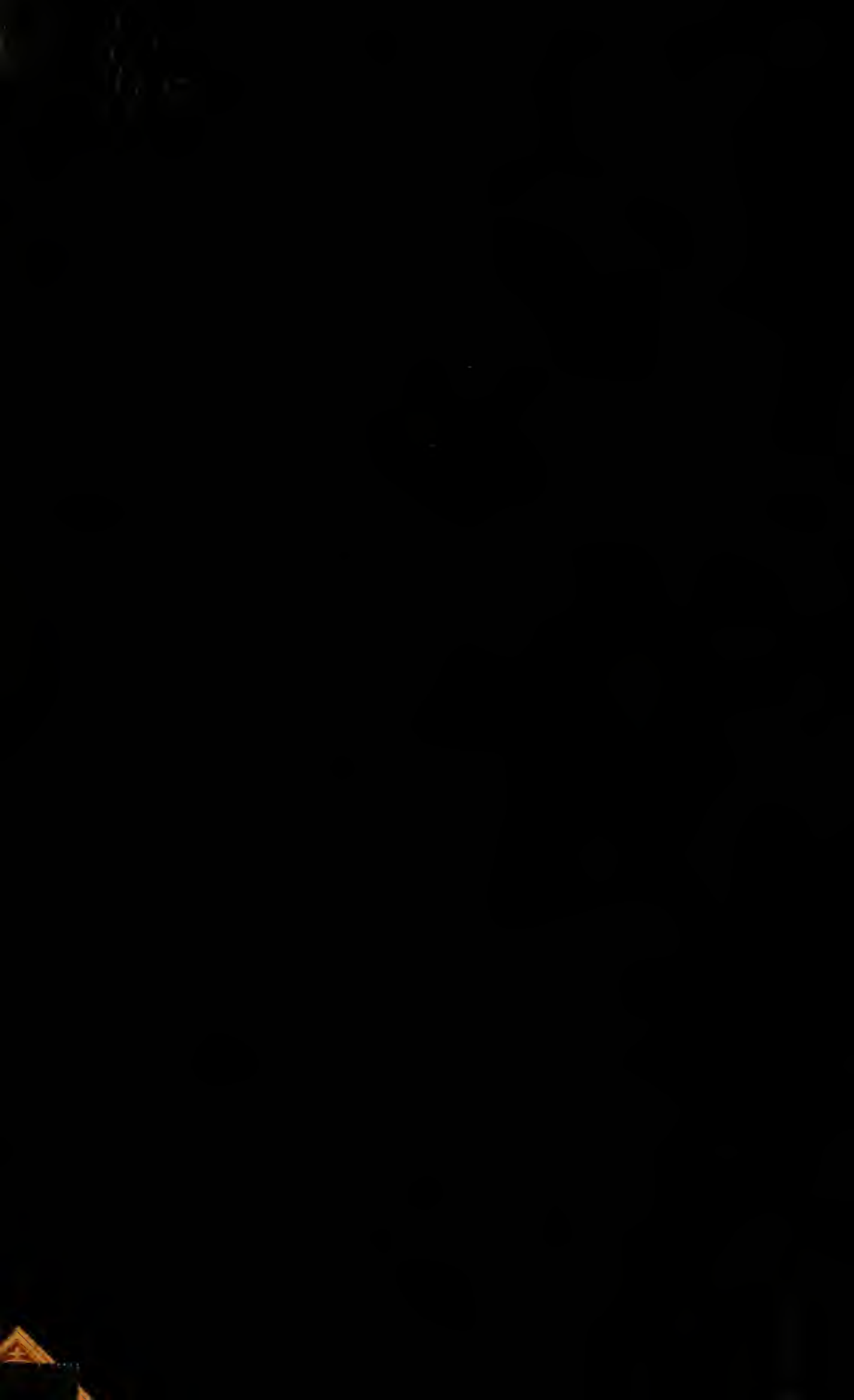
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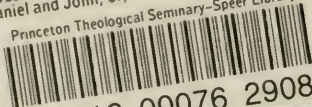
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